5 - The St. Sefanu

LETTERS

FROM

FRANCE;

CONTAINING

A GREAT VARIETY OF ORIGINAL INFORMATION CONCERNING THE MOST IMPORTANT EVENTS THAT HAVE OCCURRED IN THAT COUNTRY IN THE YEARS 1790, 1791, 1792, AND 1793.

BY HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

TO WHICH ARE ANNEXED,

The Correſpondence of DUMOURIER with PACHE, the War Miniſter, and with the Commiſſaries.—Letters of BOURNONVILLE, MIRANDA, VALENCE, &c. &c.

VOL. I.

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L E T T E R S

F R A N C E;

LETTERS
FROM
FRANCE.

LETTER I.

I ARRIVED at Paris, by a very rapid journey, the day before the federation; and when I am diſpoſed to murmur at the evils of my deſtiny, I ſhall henceforth put this piece of good fortune into the oppoſite ſcale, and reflect how many diſappointments it ought to counterbalance. Had the packet which conveyed me from Brighton to Dieppe ſailed a few hours later; had the wind been contrary; in ſhort, had I not reached Paris at the moment I did reach it, I ſhould have miſſed the moſt ſublime ſpectacle which, perhaps, was ever repreſented on the theatre of this earth.

I ſhall ſend you once a week the details which I promiſed when we parted, though I am well aware how very imperfectly I ſhall be able to deſcribe the images which preſs upon my mind. It is much eaſier to feel what is ſublime than to paint it; and all I ſhall be able to give you will be a faint ſketch, to which your own imagination muſt add colouring and ſpirit. The night before the federation, by way of prelude to the ſolemnities of that memorable day, the Te Deum was performed at the church of Notre Dame, by a greater number of muſicians than have ever been aſſembled together, excepting at Weſtminſter Abbey. The overture which preceded the Te Deum was ſimple and majeſtic: the muſic highly expreſſive, had the power of electrifying the hearers: and near the concluſion of the piece, the compoſer, by artful diſcords, produced a melancholy emotion, and then, by exciting ideas of trouble and inquietude, prepared the mind for a recitative which affected the audience in a very powerful manner, by recalling the images of that conſternation and horror which prevailed in Paris on the 13th of July, 1789, the day before that on which the Baſtille was taken. The words were, as well as I can recollect, what follows:——" People, your enemies advance, with hoſtile ſentiments, with menacing looks! They come to bathe their hands in your blood! Already they encompaſs the walls of your city! Riſe, riſe from the inaction in which you are plunged, ſeize your arms, and fly to the combat!

bat! God will combat with you! Theſe words were ſucceeded by a chorus of inſtruments and voices, deep and ſolemn, which ſeemed to chill the ſoul. But what completed the effect was, when the ſound of a loud and heavy bell mixed itſelf with this awful concert, in imitation of the alarm-bell, which, the day before the taking of the Baſtille, was rung in every church and convent in Paris, and which, it is ſaid, produced a confuſion of ſounds inexpreſſibly horrible. At this moment the audience appeared to breathe with difficulty; every heart ſeemed frozen with terror; till at length the bell ceaſed, the muſic changed its tone, and another recitative announced the entire defeat of the enemy; and the whole terminated, after a flouriſh of drums and trumpets, with an hymn of thankſgiving to the Supreme Being.

LETTER II.

I Promiſed to ſend you a deſcription of the federation: but it is not to be deſcribed! One muſt have been preſent, to form any judgment of a ſcene, the ſublimity of which depended much leſs on its external magnificence than on the effect it produced on the minds of the ſpectators. "The people, ſure,

the people were the ſight!" I may tell you of pavilions, of triumphal arches, of altars on which incenſe was burnt, of two hundred thouſand men walking in proceſſion; but how am I to give you an adequate idea of the behaviour of the ſpectators? How am I to paint the impetuous feelings of that immenſe, that exulting multitude? Half a million of people aſſembled at a ſpectacle, which furniſhed every image that can elevate the mind of man; which connected the enthuſiaſm of moral ſentiment with the ſolemn pomp of religious ceremonies; which addreſſed itſelf at once to the imagination, the underſtanding, and the heart!

The Champ de Mars was formed into an immenſe amphitheatre, round which were erected forty rows of ſeats, raiſed one above another with earth, on which wooden forms were placed. Twenty days labour, animated by the enthuſiaſm of the people, accompliſhed what ſeemed to require the toil of years. Already in the Champ de Mars the diſtinctions of rank were forgotten; and, inſpired by the ſame ſpirit, the higheſt and loweſt orders of citizens gloried in taking up the ſpade, and aſſiſting the perſons employed in a work on which the common welfare of the ſtate depended. Ladies took the inſtruments of labour in their hands, and removed a little of the earth, that they might be able to boaſt that they alſo had aſſiſted in the preparations at the Champ de Mars; and a number of old ſoldiers were ſeen voluntarily beſtowing on

their

their country the laſt remains of their ſtrength. A young Abbé of my acquaintance told me, that the people beat a drum at the door of the convent where he lived, and obliged the Superior to let all the Monks come out and work in the Champ de Mars. The Superior with great reluctance acquieſced, "Quant à moi," ſaid the young Abbé, "je ne demandois pas mieux*."

At the upper end of the amphitheatre a pavilion was built for the reception of the King, the Queen, their attendants, and the National Aſſembly; covered with ſtriped tent-cloth of the national colours, and decorated with ſtreamers of the ſame beloved tints, and fleurs de lys. The white flag was diſplayed above the ſpot where the King was ſeated. In the middle of the Champ de Mars L'Autel de la Patrie was placed, on which incenſe was burnt by prieſts dreſſed in long white robes, with ſaſhes of national ribbon. Several inſcriptions were written on the altar, but the words viſible at the greateſt diſtance were, La Nation, la Loi, et le Roi†.

At the lower end of the amphitheatre, oppoſite to the pavilion, three triumphal arches were erected, adorned with emblems and allegorical figures.

The proceſſion marched to the Champ de Mars, through the central ſtreets of Paris. At La Place de Louis Quinze, the eſcorts,

* As for me, I deſired nothing better.

† The Nation the Law, and the King.

who

who carried the colours, received under their banners, ranged in two lines, the National Aſſembly, who came from the Tuilleries. When the proceſſion paſſed the ſtreet where Henry the Fourth was aſſaſſinated, every man pauſed as if by general conſent: the cries of joy were ſuſpended, and ſucceeded by a ſolemn ſilence. This tribute of regret, paid from the ſudden impulſe of feeling at ſuch a moment, was perhaps the moſt honourable teſtimony to the virtues of that amiable Prince which his memory has yet received.

In the ſtreets, at the windows, and on the roofs of the houſes, the people, tranſported with joy, ſhouted and wept as the proceſſion paſſed. Old men were ſeen kneeling in the ſtreets, bleſſing God that they had lived to witneſs that happy moment. The people ran to the doors of their houſes loaded with refreſhments, which they offered to the troops; and crouds of women ſurrounded the ſoldiers, and holding up their infants in their arms, and melting into tears, promiſed to make their children imbibe, from their earlieſt age, an inviolable attachment to the principles of the new conſtitution.

The proceſſion entered the Champ de Mars by a long road, which thouſands of people had aſſiſted in forming, by filling up deep hollows, levelling the riſing grounds, and erecting a temporary bridge acroſs the Seine, oppoſite to the triumphal arches. The order of the proceſſion was as follows:

A troop of horſe, with trumpets.

A great

A great band of muſic.
A detachment of grenadiers.
The electors choſen at Paris in 1789.
A band of volunteers.
The aſſembly of the repreſentatives of the people.
The military committee.
Company of chaſſeurs.
A band of drums.
The Preſidents of ſixty diſtricts.
The Deputies of the people ſent to the Federation.
The adminiſtrators of the municipality.
Bands of muſic and drums.
Battalion of children, carrying a ſtandard, on which was written, L'Eſperance de la Patrie*.
Detachment with the colours of the national guard of Paris.
Battalion of veterans.
Deputies from forty-two departments, arranged alphabetically.
The Oriflamme, or grand ſtandard of the Kings of France.
Deputies from the regular troops.
Deputies from the navy.
Deputies from forty-one departments, arranged alſo alphabetically.
Band of volunteer chaſſeurs.
Troop of horſe, with trumpets.

The proceſſion, which was formed with eight perſons abreaſt, entered the Champ de

* The Hope of the Country.

Mars beneath the triumphal arches, with a diſcharge of cannon. The deputies placed themſelves round the inſide of the amphitheatre. Between them and the ſeats of the ſpectators, the national guard of Paris were ranged, and the ſeats round the amphitheatre were filled with four hundred thouſand people. The middle of the amphitheatre was crouded with an immenſe multitude of ſoldiers. The National Aſſembly walked towards the pavilion, where they placed themſelves with the King, the Queen, the royal family and their attendants; and oppoſite this group, roſe in perſpective the hills of Paſſy and Chaillot, covered with people. The ſtandards, of which one was preſented to each department of the kingdom, as a mark of brotherhood, by the citizens of Paris, were carried to the altar to be conſecrated by the biſhop. High maſs was performed, after which Monſieur de la Fayette, who had been appointed by the King Major General of the Federation, aſcended the altar, gave the ſignal, and himſelf took the national oath. In an inſtant every ſword was drawn, and every arm lifted up. The King pronounced the oath, which the Preſident of the National Aſſembly repeated, and the ſolemn words were re-echoed by ſix hundred thouſand voices; while the Queen raiſed the Dauphin in her arms, ſhewing him to the people and the army. At the moment the conſecrated banners were diſplayed, the ſun, which had been obſcured by frequent ſhowers in the courſe of the morning, burſt forth, while the

people

people lifted their eyes to heaven, and called upon the Deity to look down and witneſs the ſacred engagement into which they entered. A reſpectful ſilence was ſucceeded by the cries, the ſhouts, the acclamations of the multitude: they wept, they embraced each other, and then diſperſed.

You will not ſuſpect that I was an indifferent witneſs of ſuch a ſcene. Oh no! this was not a time in which the diſtinctions of country were remembered. It was the triumph of human kind; it was man aſſerting the nobleſt privileges of his nature; and it required but the common feelings of humanity to become in that moment a citizen of the world. For myſelf, I acknowledge that my heart caught with enthuſiaſm the general ſympathy; my eyes were filled with tears; and I ſhall never forget the ſenſations of that day, "while memory holds her ſeat in my "boſom."

The weather proved very unfavourable during the morning of the federation; but the minds of people were too much elevated by ideas of moral good, to attend to the phyſical evils of the day. Several heavy ſhowers were far from interrupting the general gaiety. The people, when drenched by the rain, called out with exultation, rather than regret, * "Nous ſommes mouillez a la nation." Some exclaimed, † "La revolution Françoiſe eſt cimentée avec de l'eau, au lieu de ſang." The national guard, during the

* We are wet for the nation.

† The French revolution is cemented with water, inſtead of blood.

hours which preceded the arrival of the proceſſion, amuſed the ſpectators * d'une dance ronde, and with a thouſand whimſical and playful evolutions, highly expreſſive of that gaiety which diſtinguiſhes the French character. I believe none but Frenchmen would have diverted themſelves, and half a million of people, who were waiting in expectation of a ſcene the moſt ſolemn upon record, by circles of ten thouſand men galloping † en dance ronde. But if you are diſpoſed to think of this gaiety with the contempt of ſuperior gravity, for I will not call it wiſdom, recollect that theſe dancers were the very men whoſe bravery formed the great epocha of French liberty; the heroes who demoliſhed the towers of the Baſtille, and whoſe fame will deſcend to the lateſt poſterity.

Such was the admirable order with which this auguſt ſpectacle was conducted, that no accident interrupted the univerſal feſtivity. All carriages were forbidden during that day, and the entrances to the Champ de Mars were ſo numerous, that half a million of people were collected together without a croud.

The people had only one ſubject of regret: they murmured that the king had taken the national oath in the pavilion, inſtead of performing that ceremony at the foot of the altar; and ſome of them crouding round Monſ. de la Fayette, conjured him to perſuade the king to go to the altar, and take the oath a ſecond time. ‡ "Mes

* With dancing in a circle.

† In the round dance.

‡ My friends, the oath is not an air which can be played twice over.

enfans,"

enfans," ſaid Monſ. de la Fayette, " le ſerment n'eſt pas une ariette, on ne peut pas le jouer deux fois."

Monſieur de la Fayette, after the Federation, went to the Chateau de la Muette, where a public dinner was prepared for the national guard. An immenſe croud gathered round him when he alighted from his horſe, at a little diſtance from the chateau, and ſome Ariſtocrates, mixing themſelves with the true worſhippers of him who is ſo juſtly the idol of the French nation, attempted to ſtifle him with their embraces. He called out " * *Mais, mes amis, vous m'etouffez!*" and one of his *aide de camps*, who perceived the danger of his general, threw himſelf from his horſe, which he intreated Monſ. de la Fayette to mount. He did ſo, and haſtened to the chateau.

This incident reminds me of a line in Racine's fine tragedy of Britannicus, where Nero ſays,

† " J'embraſſe mon rival, mais c'eſt pour l'etouffer."

Adieu.

* But, my friends, you ſtifle me.
† I embrace my rival, but it is to deſtroy him.

LETTER

LETTER III.

THE rejoicings at Paris did not terminate with the ceremony of the Federation. A ſucceſſion of entertainments, which laſted ſeveral days, were prepared for the deputies from the provinces, who are all quartered in the houſes of the bourgeois, where they were received with the moſt cordial hoſpitality.

The night of the 14th of July the whole city of Paris was illuminated, and the next day le ci-devant Duc, now Monſ. d'Orleans, gave a public dinner to the national guard in the hall of the Palais Royal. We walked in the evening round the gallery, from which we ſaw part of the croud below amuſing themſelves by dancing, while others were ſinging in chorus the favourite national ſongs.

On the following Sunday the national guards were reviewed by Monſ. de la Fayette in the Champ de Mars, which was again filled with ſpectators, and the people appeared more enthuſiaſtic than ever in the applauſes of their general. The Champ de Mars reſounded with repeated cries of * "Vive Monſ. de la Fayette." On this day carriages were again forbidden, and the evening diſplayed a ſcene of general rejoicing. The whole city was illuminated, and crouds of company filled the gardens of the

* Long live Monſ. de la Fayette.

Tuilleries,

Tuilleries, from which we ſaw the beautiful façade of the Louvre lighted in the moſt ſplendid manner. In the Champs Elyſées, where a fête was given to the Deputies, innumerable lamps were hung from one row of trees to another, and ſhed the moſt agreeable brilliance on thoſe enchanting walks; where the exhilarated croud danced and ſung, and filled the air with the ſound of rejoicing. Several parties of the national guard came from the Champ Elyſées, dancing along the walks of the Tuilleries with a woman between every two men; and all the prieſts, whom they met in their way, they obliged to join in the dance, treating them as women, by placing them between two ſoldiers, and ſometimes ſportively dreſſing them in grenadiers caps. Fire-works of great variety and beauty were exhibited on the Pont Neuf, and the ſtatue of Henry the Fourth was decorated with the ornament of all others the moſt dear in the eyes of the people, a ſcarf of national ribbon. Tranſparencies of Monſ. de la Fayette and Monſ. Bailly were placed, as the higheſt mark of public favour, on each ſide of this revered ſtatue.

But the ſpectacle of all others the moſt intereſting to my feelings, was the rejoicings at the Baſtille. The ruins of that execrable fortreſs were ſuddenly transformed, as if with the wand of necromancy, into a ſcene of beauty and of pleaſure. The ground was covered with freſh clods of graſs, upon which young trees were placed in rows, and illuminated with a blaze of light. Here the minds of the people took a higher tone of exultation than in the other

ſcenes

ſcenes of feſtivity. Their mutual congratulations, their reflections on the horror of the paſt, their ſenſe of preſent felicity, their cries of *"Vive la Nation," ſtill ring in my ear! I too, though but a ſojourner in their land, rejoiced in their happineſs, joined the univerſal voice, and repeated with all my heart and ſoul, "Vive la nation!"

LETTER IV.

BEFORE I ſuffered my friends at Paris to conduct me through the uſual routine of convents, churches, and palaces, I requeſted to viſit the Baſtille; feeling a much ſtronger deſire to contemplate the ruins of that building than the moſt perfect edifices of Paris. When we got into the carriage, our French ſervant called to the coachman with an air of triumph, †"A la Baſtille, mais nous n'y reſterons pas." We drove under that porch which ſo many wretches have entered never to repaſs, and alighting from the carriage, deſcended with difficulty into the dungeons, which were too low to admit of our ſtanding upright, and ſo dark that we were obliged at noon-day to viſit them with the light of a candle. We ſaw the hooks of thoſe chains

* Long live the Nation.
† To the Baſtille,——but we ſhall not remain there.

by

by which the priſoners were faſtened round the neck, to the walls of their cells; many of which being below the level of the water, are in a conſtant ſtate of humidity; and a noxious vapour iſſued from them, which more than once extinguiſhed the candle, and was ſo inſufferable that it required a ſtrong ſpirit of curioſity to tempt tone to enter. Good God!——and to thoſe regions of horror were human creatures dragged at the caprice of deſpotic power. What a melancholy conſideration, that

——"Man! proud man,
Dreſt in a little brief authority,
Plays ſuch fantaſtic tricks before high heaven,
As make the angels weep."——

There appears to be a greater number of theſe dungeons than one could have imagined the hard heart of tyranny itſelf would contrive; for, ſince the deſtruction of the building, many ſubterraneous cells have been diſcovered underneath a piece of ground which was incloſed within the walls of the Baſtille, but which ſeemed a bank of ſolid earth before the horrid ſecrets of this priſon-houſe were diſcloſed. Some ſkeletons were found in theſe receſſes, with irons ſtill faſtened on their decaying bones.

After having viſited the Baſtille, we may indeed be ſurprized that a nation ſo enlightened as the French, ſubmitted ſo long to the oppreſſions of their government; but we muſt ceaſe to wonder that their indignant ſpirits at length ſhook off the galling yoke.

Thoſe who have contemplated the dungeons of the Baſtille, without rejoicing in the French revolution, may, for ought I know, be very reſpectable

ſpectable perſons, and very agreeable companions in the hours of proſperity; but, if my heart were ſinking with anguiſh, I ſhould not fly to thoſe perſons for conſolation. Sterne ſays, that a man is incapable of loving one woman as he ought, who has not a ſort of an affection for the whole ſex; and as little ſhould I look for particular ſympathy from thoſe who have no feelings of general philanthropy. If the ſplendour of a deſpotic throne can only ſhine like the radiance of lightning, while all around is involved in gloom and horror, in the name of heaven let its baleful luſtre be extinguiſhed for ever. May no ſuch ſtrong contraſt of light and ſhade again exiſt in the political ſyſtem of France! but may the beams of liberty, like the beams of day, ſhed their benign influence on the cottage of the peaſant, as well as on the palace of the monarch! May liberty, which for ſo many ages paſt has taken pleaſure in ſoftening the evils of the bleak and rugged climates of the north, in fertilizing a barren ſoil, in clearing the ſwamp, in lifting mounds againſt the inundations of the tempeſt, diffuſe her bleſſings alſo on the genial land of France, and bid the huſbandman rejoice under the ſhade of the olive and the vine.

The Baſtille, which Henry the Fourth and his veteran troops aſſailed in vain, the citizens of Paris had the glory of taking in a few hours. The avarice of Monſ. de Launay had tempted him to guard this fortreſs with only half the complement of men ordered by government; and a letter which he received the morning of the 14th of July, commanding him to ſuſtain the ſiege till the evening, when ſuccour would arrive,

arrive, joined to his own treachery towards the aſſailants, coſt him his life.

The courage of the beſiegers was inflamed by the horrors of famine, there being at this time only twenty-four hours proviſion of bread in Paris. For ſome days the people had aſſembled in crouds round the ſhops of the bakers, who were obliged to have a guard of ſoldiers to protect them from the famiſhed multitude; while the women, rendered furious by want, cried, in the reſolute tone of deſpair, * "Il nous faut du pain pour nos enfans." Such was the ſcarcity of bread, that a French gentleman told me, that, the day preceding the taking of the Baſtille, he was invited to dine with a Negotiant, and, when he went, was informed that a ſervant had been out five hours in ſearch of bread, and had at laſt been able to purchaſe only one loaf.

It was at this criſis, it was to ſave themſelves the ſhocking ſpectacle of their wives and infants periſhing before their eyes, that the citizens of Paris flew to arms, and, impelled by ſuch cauſes, fought with the daring intrepidity of men who had all that renders life of any value at ſtake, and who determined to die or conquer. The women too, far from indulging the fears incident to our feeble ſex, in defiance of the cannon of the Baſtille, ventured to bring victuals to their ſons and huſbands; and, with a ſpirit worthy of Roman matrons, encouraged them to go on. Women mounted guard in the ſtreets, and when any perſon paſſed, called out boldly, † "Qui va la?"

* We muſt have bread for our children.
† Who goes there?

A gen-

A gentleman, who had the command of fifty men in this enterprize, told me, that one of his ſoldiers being killed by a cannon-ball, the people, with great marks of indignation, removed the corpſe, and then ſnatching up the dead man's hat, begged money of the byſtanders for his interment, in a manner characteriſtic enough of that gaiety, which never forſakes the French, even on ſuch occaſions as would make any other people on earth ſerious. * "Madame, pour ce pauvre diable qui ſe fait tué pour la Nation!—Monſ. pour ce pauvre chien qui ſe fait tué pour la nation!" This mode of ſupplication, though not very pathetic, obtained the end deſired; no perſon being ſufficiently obdurate to reſiſt the powerful plea, † "qu'il ſe fait tué pour la Nation."

When the Baſtille was taken, and the old man, of whom you have no doubt heard, and who had been confined in a dungeon thirty-five years, was brought into day light, which had not for ſo long a ſpace of time viſited his eyes, he ſtaggered, ſhook his white beard, and cried faintly, ‡ "Meſſieurs, vous m'avez rendu un grand ſervice, rendez m'en un autre, tuez moi! je ne ſais où aller."—"Allons, allons," the croud anſwered with one voice, "la Nation te nourrira."

As the heroes of the Baſtille paſſed along the ſtreets after its ſurrender, the citizens ſtood at

* Madam, for this poor devil, who has been killed for the nation!——Sir, for this unfortunate dog, who has been killed for the Nation!

† Had been killed for the Nation.

‡ Gentlemen, you have rendered me one great ſervice; render me another, kill me! for I know not where to go.——Come along, come along, the Nation will provide for you.

the

the doors of their houſes loaded with wine, brandy, and other refreſhments, which they offered to theſe deliverers of their country. But they unanimouſly refuſed to taſte any ſtrong liquors, conſidering the great work they had undertaken as not yet accompliſhed, and being determined to watch the whole night, in caſe of any ſurprize.

All thoſe who had aſſiſted in taking the Baſtille, were preſented by the municipality of Paris with a ribbon of the national colours, on which is ſtamped, incloſed in a circle of braſs, an impreſſion of the Baſtille, and which is worn as a military order.

The municipality of Paris alſo propoſed a ſolemn funeral proceſſion in memory of thoſe who loſt their lives in this enterprize; but, on making application to the National Aſſembly for a deputation of its members to aſſiſt at this ſolemnity, the Aſſembly were of opinion that theſe funeral honours ſhould be poſtponed till a more favourable moment, as they might at preſent have a tendency to inflame the minds of the people.

I have heard ſeveral perſons mention a young man, of a little inſignificant figure, who, the day before the Baſtille was taken, got up on a chair in the Palais Royal, and harangued the multitude, conjuring them to make a ſtruggle for their liberty, and aſſerting, that now the moment was arrived. They liſtened to his eloquence with the moſt eager attention; and, when he had inſtructed as many as could hear him at one time, he requeſted them to depart, and repeated his harangue to a new ſet of auditors.

Among

Among the dungeons of the Baſtille are placed, upon a heap of ſtones, the figures of the two men who contrived the plan of this fortreſs, where they were afterwards confined for life. Theſe men are repreſented chained to the wall, and are beheld without any emotion of ſympathy.

The perſon employed to remove the ruins of the Baſtille, has framed of the ſtones eighty-three complete models of this building, which, with a true patriotic ſpirit, he has preſented to the eighty-three departments of the kingdom, by way of hint to his countrymen to take care of their liberties in future.

LETTER V.

I Am juſt returned from a viſit to Madame Sillery, whoſe works on education are ſo well known and ſo juſtly eſteemed in England, and who received me with the moſt engaging politeneſs. Surely the French are unrivalled in the arts of pleaſing; in the power of uniting with the moſt poliſhed elegance of manners, that attentive kindneſs which ſeems to flow warm from the heart, and which, while it ſooths our vanity, ſecures our affections. Madame Sillery and her pupils are at preſent at St. Leu, a beautiful ſpot in the rich valley of Montmorenci. Monſ. d' Orleans has certainly conferred a moſt eſſential obligation

obligation upon his children, by placing them under the care of this lady. I never met with young people more amiable in their diſpoſitions, or more charming in their manners, which are equally remote from arrogance, and from thoſe efforts of condeſcenſion which I have ſeen ſome great people make, with much difficulty to themſelves, and much offence to others. The Princeſs, who is thirteen years of age, has a countenance of the ſweeteſt expreſſion, and appears to me to be Adelaide the heroine of Madame Sillery's Letters on education, perſonified. The three princes, though under Madame Sillery's ſuperintendence, have alſo preceptors who live in the houſe, and aſſiſt in their education. The eldeſt prince, Monſ. de Chartres, is nearly eighteen years of age, and his attentive politeneſs formed a ſtriking contraſt in my mind, to the manners of thoſe faſhionable gentlemen in a certain great metropolis, who conſider apathy and negligence as the teſt of good breeding. But if I was pleaſed with the manners of this young Prince, I was ſtill more delighted to find him a confirmed friend to the new conſtitution of France, and willing, with the enthuſiaſm of a young and ardent mind, to renounce the ſplendour of his titles for the general good. When he heard that the ſacrifice of fortune alſo was required, and that the immenſe property, which he had been taught to conſider as his inheritance, was to be divided with his brothers, he embraced them with the utmoſt affection, declaring that he ſhould rejoice in ſuch a diviſion. To find a democratic Prince, was ſomewhat ſingular: I was much leſs ſurprized that Madame Sillery had

had adopted ſentiments which are ſo congenial to an enlarged and comprehenſive mind. This lady I have called Sillery, becauſe it is the name by which ſhe is known in England: but, ſince the decree of the National Aſſembly, aboliſhing the nobility, ſhe has renounced with her title the name of Sillery, and has taken that of Brulart. She talked to me of the diſtinctions of rank, in the ſpirit of philoſophy, and ridiculed the abſurdity of converting the rewards of perſonal merit into the inheritance of thoſe who had perhaps ſo little claim to honours, that they were a ſort of oblique reproach on their character and conduct. There may be arguments againſt hereditary rank ſufficiently convincing to ſuch an underſtanding as Madame Brulart's: but I know ſome French ladies who entertain very different notions on this ſubject; who ſee no impropriety in the eſtabliſhments of nobility; and who have carried their love of ariſtocratical rights ſo far as to keep their beds, in a fit of deſpondency, upon being obliged to relinquiſh the agreeable epithets of Comteſſe or Marquiſe, to which their ears had been ſo long accuſtomed.

But let me do juſtice to the ladies of France. The number of thoſe who have murmured at the loſs of rank, bears a very ſmall proportion to thoſe who have acted with a ſpirit of diſtinguiſhed patriotiſm; who, with thoſe generous affections which belong to the female heart, have gloried in ſacrificing titles, fortune, and even the perſonal ornaments, ſo dear to female vanity, for the common cauſe. It was the ladies who gave the example of le don patriotique *, by of-

* The patriotic donation.

fering

fering their jewels at the ſhrine of liberty; and, if the women of ancient Rome have gained the applauſe of diſtant ages for ſuch actions, the women of France will alſo claim the admiration of poſterity.

The women have certainly had a conſiderable ſhare in the French revolution: for, whatever the imperious lords of the creation may fancy, the moſt important events which take place in this world depend a little on our influence; and we often act in human affairs like thoſe ſecret ſprings in mechaniſm, by which, though inviſible, great movements are regulated.

But let us return to Madame Brulart, who wears at her breaſt a medallion made of a ſtone of the Baſtille poliſhed. In the middle of the medallion, *Liberte* was written in diamonds; above was marked in diamonds, the planet that ſhone on the 14th of July; and below was ſeen the moon, of the ſize ſhe appeared that memorable night. The medallion was ſet in a branch of laurel, compoſed of emeralds, and tied at the top with the national cockade, formed of brilliant ſtones of the three national colours.

Our converſation on the ſubject of the Baſtille, led Madame Brulart to relate an action of Monſ. de Chartres, which reflects the higheſt honour on his humanity. Being in Normandy, he viſited Mont St. Michel, a fortreſs built on a rock which ſtands a league and a half from the coaſt of Normandy. The tide covers this ſpace twice every twenty-four hours, but when it is low-water, a perſon can paſs over on foot. Mont St. Michel was originally a church, founded by a good biſhop in the ſeventh century, in honour

of St. Michel, who, it ſeems, appeared to him in a viſion on this ſpot. Richard, the firſt Duke of Normandy of that name, afterwards converted the church into an abbey, and this abbey gave riſe to the military order des Chevaliers de St. Michel, inſtituted by Louis the Eleventh. After having ſeen the precious relics of the abbey, the ſquare buckler, and the ſhort ſword found in Ireland near the body of the well known dragon, whoſe deſtruction is attributed to the proweſs of St. Michel, Monſ. de Chartres was conducted, through many labyrinths, to the ſubterraneous parts of the edifice; where he was ſhewn a wooden cage, which was made by order of Louis the Fourteenth, for the puniſhment of an unfortunate wit, who had dared to ridicule his conqueſts in Holland, no ſooner gained than loſt. Monſ. de Chartres, beheld with horror this inſtrument of tyranny, in which priſoners were ſtill frequently confined; and, expreſſing in very ſtrong terms his indignation, he was told, that as a prince of the blood, he had a right, if he thought proper, to order the cage to be deſtroyed. Scarcely were the words pronounced, when the young Prince ſeized a hatchet, gave the firſt ſtroke himſelf to this execrable machine, waited to ſee it levelled with the ground, and thus may claim the glory of having, even before the demolition of the Baſtille, begun the French revolution.

We found at St. Leu a young Engliſh lady, who is the companion of the Princeſs, and whoſe appearance is calculated to give the moſt favourable idea of Engliſh beauty. I never ſaw more regular features, or an expreſſion of countenance more

more lovely: and Madame Brulart, by whom she has been educated, assured me that "the mind keeps the promise we had from the face." This young lady talked of her own country with a glow of satisfaction very grateful to my feelings. She seems to,

"Cast a look where England's glories shine,
"And bids her bosom sympathise with mine."

LETTER VI.

I HAVE been at the National Assembly, where, at a time when the deputies from the provinces engrossed every ticket of admission, my sister and I were admitted without tickets, by the gentleman who had the command of the guard, and placed in the best seats, before he suffered the doors to be opened to other people. We had no personal acquaintance with this gentleman, or any claim to his politeness, except that of being foreigners and women; but these are, of all claims, the most powerful to the urbanity of French manners.

My sister observed to me, that our seats, which were immediately opposite the tribune from which the members speak, reminded her of our struggles to attain the same situation in Westminster Hall. But you must recollect, I answered, that we have attained this situation without any struggle. I believe, however, that

if the fame of Mr. Fox's eloquence ſhould lead a French woman to preſent herſelf at the door of Weſtminſter Hall without a ticket, ſhe might ſtand there as long as Mr. Haſtings's trial has laſted, without being permitted to paſs the barrier.

The hall of the National Aſſembly is long and narrow; at each end there is a gallery, where the common people are admitted by applying very early in the morning for numbers, which are diſtributed at the door; and the perſons who firſt apply ſecure the firſt numbers. The ſeats being alſo numbered, all confuſion and diſorder are prevented. The galleries at the ſide of the hall are divided into boxes, which are called tribunes. They belong to the principal members of the National Aſſembly, and to theſe places company are admitted with tickets. Rows of ſeats are placed round the hall, raiſed one above another, where the members of the Aſſembly are ſeated; and immediately oppoſite the chair of the preſident, in the narrow part of the hall, is the tribune which the members aſcend when they are going to ſpeak. One capital ſubject of debate in this Aſſembly is, who ſhall ſpeak firſt; for all ſeem more inclined to talk than to liſten; and ſometimes the preſident in vain rings a bell, or with the vehemence of French action ſtretches out his arms, and endeavours to impoſe ſilence; while the ſix Huiſſers, perſons who are appointed to keep order, make the attempt with as little ſucceſs as the preſident himſelf. But one ceaſes to wonder that the meetings of the National Aſſembly are

tumultuous,

tumultuous, on reflecting how important are the objects of its deliberations. Not only the lives and fortunes of individuals, but the exiſtence of the country is at ſtake: and of how little conſequence is this impetuoſity in debate, if the decrees which are paſſed are wiſe and beneficial, and the new conſtitution ariſes, like the beauty and order of nature, from the confuſion of mingled elements! I heard ſeveral of the members ſpeak; but I am ſo little qualified to judge of oratory, that, without preſuming to determine whether I had reaſon to be entertained or not, I ſhall only tell you that I was ſo.

And this, repeated I with exultation to myſelf, this is the National Aſſembly of France! Thoſe men now before my eyes are the men who engroſs the attention, the aſtoniſhment of Europe; for the iſſue of whoſe decrees ſurrounding nations wait in ſuſpence, and whoſe fame has already extended through every civilized region of the globe: the men whoſe magnanimity inveſted them with power to deſtroy the old conſtitution, and whoſe wiſdom is erecting the new, on a principle of perfection which has hitherto been thought chimerical, and has only ſerved to adorn the page of the philoſopher; but which they believe may be reduced to practice, and have therefore the courage to attempt. My mind, with a ſenſation of elevated pleaſure, paſſing through the interval of ages, anticipated the increaſing renown of theſe legiſlators, and the period when, all the nations of Europe following the liberal ſyſtem which France has adopted, the little crooked policy of the preſent times

ſhall give place to the reign of reaſon, virtue, and ſcience.

The moſt celebrated characters in the National Aſſembly were pointed out to us. Monſieur Barnave de Dauphiné, who is only ſix and twenty years of age, and the youngeſt member of the Aſſembly, is eſteemed its firſt orator, and is the leader of the democratic party. I believe Monſ. Barnave does not owe all his reputation to his talents, however diſtinguiſhed: his virtues alſo claim a conſiderable ſhare of that applauſe which he receives from his country. He has ſhewn himſelf as ſtedfaſt in principle, as he is eloquent in debate. With firm undeviating integrity he has defended the cauſe of the people. Every motion he has made in the Aſſembly has paſſed into a law, becauſe its beneficial tendency has been always evident; and it was he who effected that memorable decree which deprived the King of the power of making war, without the conſent of the nation. Monſ. Barnave is adored by the people; who have two or three times taken the horſes from his carriage, and drawn him in triumph along the ſtreets of Paris.

We alſo ſaw Monſ. Mirabeau l'ainé, whoſe genius is of the firſt claſs, but who poſſeſſes a very ſmall ſhare of popularity. I am, however, one of his partizans, though not merely from that enthuſiaſm which always comes acroſs my heart in favour of great intellectual abilities. Monſ. Mirabeau has another very powerful claim on my partiality: he is the profeſſed friend (and I muſt and will love him for being ſo) of the African race. He has propoſed the abolition of the ſlave trade to the National Aſſembly, and,

though the Aſſembly have delayed the conſideration of this ſubject, on account of thoſe deliberations which immediately affect the country, yet, perhaps, if our ſenators continue to doze over this affair as they have hitherto done, the French will have the glory of ſetting us an example, which it will then be our humble employment to follow. But I truſt the period will never come, when England will ſubmit to be taught by another nation the leſſon of humanity. I truſt an Engliſh Houſe of Commons will never perſiſt in thinking, that what is morally wrong, can be politically right; that the virtue and the proſperity of a people are things at variance with each other; and that a country which abounds with ſo many ſources of wealth, cannot afford to cloſe one polluted channel, which is ſtained with the blood of our fellow-creatures.

But it is a ſort of treaſon to the honour, the ſpirit, the generoſity of Engliſhmen, to ſuppoſe they will perſevere in ſuch conduct. Admitting, however, a ſuppoſition which it is painful to make: admitting that they ſhould abide by this ſyſtem of inhumanity, they will only retard, but not finally prevent the abolition of ſlavery. The Africans have not long to ſuffer, nor their oppreſſors to triumph. Europe is haſtening towards a period too enlightened for the perpetuation of ſuch monſtrous abuſes. The miſts of ignorance and error are rolling faſt away, and the benign beams of philoſophy are ſpreading their luſtre over the nations.—But whither have theſe children of captivity led me? I perceive I have wandered a great way from the National Aſſembly, where I was ſo happily ſeated, and of which I will tell you more in my next letter.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

THE Abbé Maury is one of the moſt diſtinguiſhed members of the National Aſſembly. He poſſeſſes aſtoniſhing powers of eloquence; but he has done his talents the injuſtice to make them ſubſervient to the narrow conſiderations of ſelf-intereſt. Had he diſplayed that ability in defence of civil and religious liberty, which he has employed in the ſervice of the exorbitant pretentions of the church, he would have deſerved the higheſt applauſe of his country; inſtead of which, he has called to the aid of his genius an auxiliary it ought to have ſcorned; that ſubtlety which tries "to make the worſe appear the better reaſon;" and he is ſtill more deteſted than admired. I am not ſurprized that a little mind is ſometimes tempted by intereſt to tread in a mean and forbid path; but I own it does aſtoniſh me that genius can be ſeduced from the fair field of honourable fame into thoſe ſerpentine ways where it can meet with no object worthy of its ambition. "Something too much of this." You ſhall hear a repartee of the Abbé Maury, who, after having made a very unpopular motion in the Aſſembly, was inſulted as he was going out; the people crying, as they are too apt to do, * "A la lanterne." The Abbé, turning to the croud, anſwered, with equal indignation and ſpirit, † "Eh! Meſſieurs, ſi j'etois à la lan-

* To the lantern.

† If I were at the lantern, would you be more enlightened!

terne,

terne, ſeriez vous plus eclairés?" The Abbé Maury, before the revolution, was in poſſeſſion of eight hundred farms, and has loſt ſixty thouſand livres a year in conſequence of that event. But enough of Monſ. l'Abbé, whoſe picture I have juſt purchaſed in a ſnuff-box. You touch a ſpring, open the lid of the ſnuff box, and the Abbé jumps up, and occaſions much ſurprize and merriment. The joke, however, is grown a little ſtale in France: but I ſhall bring the Abbé with me to England, where I flatter myſelf his ſudden appearance will afford ſome diverſion.

A ſingular but very reſpectable figure in the National Aſſembly is a Deputy from Britanny, called Le Pere Gerard. This venerable old man is a peaſant, and his appearance reminds one of thoſe times when Generals were called from the plough to take the command of armies. The dreſs of Le Pere Gerard is made of a coarſe woollen cloth, which is worn by the peaſants of Britanny, and is of ſuch ſtrong texture that a coat often deſcends from one generation to another. This cloth is called Pinchina; and the King, to whom the old Breton has preſented ſeveral addreſſes from the Aſſembly, calls him, * en badinage, Le Pere Pinchina. When I ſaw him, he had on this everlaſting coat, and wore worſted ſtockings gartered above the knees. But, what pleaſed me moſt in his appearance, were the long white hairs which hung down his ſhoulders; an ornament for which you know I have a particular predilection.

* In pleaſantry, Father Pinchina.

The

The reſpectable Pere Gerard boaſts that he is deſcended from a race of deputies, his great grandfather having been choſen as a deputy to Les Etats Generaux in 1614, the laſt time the States were held, before that memorable period when they effected the revolution.

At the time when the ladies ſet the example of * Le don patriotique, by offering their jewels, and the members of the National Aſſembly, in a moment of enthuſiaſm took the ſilver buckles out of their ſhoes, and laid them on the Preſident's table, the Pere Gerard aroſe, and ſaid, that he had no ſuch offering to give, his buckles being made of braſs, but that his don patriotique ſhould be that of rendering his ſervices to his country unpaid. The old man was heard by the Aſſembly with the applauſe he merited; and the people, on the day of the Federation, carried him from the Champ de Mars to his own houſe in triumph on their ſhoulders.

Meſſieurs Charles and Alexander Lameth, two brothers, and Monſ. Rabeau de St. Eſtienne, are among the firſt patriots of the National Aſſembly, and have a very high reputation for talents. The French, who love what they call an † equivoque, tell you, que Monſ. Rabeau vaut deux d'Mirabeau.

The meetings of the Aſſembly, though ſtill tumultuous, are much leſs ſo than they were at their firſt commencement. A gentleman, who was preſent when the motion was made for aboliſhing monaſteries, told me, that the minds of

* The patriotic donation.
† A play upon words.

the

the members were, on that occaſion, inflamed to ſuch a height, that it appeared to him very probable, that the debate would end in a maſſacre. He mentioned a circumſtance very characteriſtic of French vivacity. One of the members was expreſſing himſelf in theſe words, "What is a Monk? A man who has renounced his father, his mother, every tie, every affection that is dear in nature! and for whom?"—before the ſpeaker could finiſh his ſentence, a member from the other end of the hall ſeized the moment while the orator was drawing his breath, and called out * "Pour une puiſſance etrangere," to the great horror of la coté noir, for ſo the clergy are called.

The Democrates place themſelves on one ſide of the hall, and the Ariſtocrates on the other. The ſpectators in the galleries take ſuch a part in the debate, as frequently to expreſs their applauſe by clapping their hands with great violence. An old Marechal of France roſe, the day I was at the Aſſembly, when they were debating on the military penſions, and declared, that in recompence for the ſervices which he had rendered his country, he deſired honours and not pay. The Aſſembly clapped him, and the galleries joined in this mark of approbation. A young Frenchman, who ſat next me, whiſpered to me, † "Monſ. trouve apparament que l'argent l'incommode."

The members of the National Aſſembly are paid three crowns a day for their attendance;

* For a foreign power.

† I ſuppoſe that gentleman finds money troubleſome.

while in England a candidate for a ſeat in parliament often ſpends many thouſand pounds, and, with magnificent generoſity, makes a whole county drunk for a week, merely to enjoy the privilege of ſerving his country without pay.

The qualification requiſite, for a member of the National Aſſembly, is that of poſſeſſing ſufficient property in land or houſes to pay taxes to the amount of a marc d'argent, which is the value of four louis. Every hundred of the citizens, who pay taxes to government of three days labour, or three livres, have a right to vote for an elector, whoſe qualification is that of paying taxes to the amount of ten livres, or ten days labour. The electors of one department meet together in one aſſembly, and chuſe from among their own body the perſons who are to direct the adminiſtration of that department. Thoſe electors will alſo chuſe in the ſame manner the deputies ſent by that department to the National Aſſembly. There will therefore be only one intermediate degree between the loweſt order of active citizens, and the members of the National Aſſembly.

I was interrupted by a viſitor, who related a little incident, which has intereſted me ſo much, that I can write of nothing elſe at preſent, and you ſhall therefore have it warm from my heart. While the National Aſſembly were deliberating upon the diviſion of property among brothers, a young man of high birth and fortune, who is a member of the Aſſembly, entered with precipitation, and, mounting the tribune, with great emotion informed the Aſſembly, that he had juſt received account that his father was dyin that he

he himſelf was his eldeſt ſon, and had come to conjure the Aſſembly to paſs, without delay, that equitable decree, giving the younger ſons an equal ſhare of fortune with the eldeſt, in order, he ſaid, that his father might have the ſatisfaction, before he breathed his laſt, of knowing that all his children were ſecure of a proviſion. If you are not affected by this circumſtance, you have read it with very different feelings from thoſe with which I have written it: but if, on the contrary, you have fallen in love with this young Frenchman, do not imagine your paſſion is ſingular, for I am violently in love with him myſelf.

LETTER VIII.

YOU have not heard, perhaps, that on the day of the Federation at Paris, the national oath was taken throughout the whole kingdom, at the hour of twelve.

A great number of farmers and peaſants walked in the proceſſion at Rouen, bearing in their hands the inſtruments of their huſbandry, decorated with national ribbons. The national guard cut down branches from the trees, and ſtuck them in their hats; and a French gentleman of my acquaintance, who underſtands Engliſh, and reads Shakeſpeare, told me that it ſeemed like Birnham Wood coming to Dunſinane.

The

The leaders of the French revolution, are men well acquainted with the human heart. They have not truſted merely to the force of reaſon, but have ſtudied to intereſt in their cauſe the moſt powerful paſſions of human nature, by the appointment of ſolemnities perfectly calculated to awaken that general ſympathy which is caught from heart to heart with irreſiſtible energy, fills every eye with tears, and throbs in every boſom.

I have heard of a proceſſion, which took place not long ago in one of the diſtricts of Paris, in which five hundred young ladies walked dreſſed in white, and decorated with cockades of the national ribbon, leading by ſilken cords a number of priſoners newly releaſed from captivity; and who with their faces covered by long flowing veils, were conducted to a church, where they returned thanks for their deliverance.

Thus have the leaders of the revolution engaged beauty as one of their auxiliaries, juſtly concluding, that, to the gallantry and ſenſibility of Frenchmen, no argument would be found more efficacious than that of a pretty face.

I have juſt read a private letter from a little town about two leagues from Montauban, called Negre-Peliſſe, where the inhabitants on the day of the Federation, diſplayed a liberality of ſentiment, which reflects honour, not only on themſelves, but on the age in which we live. The national guard of this little town and its environs, were aſſembled to take the national oath. Half of the inhabitants being proteſtants, and the other half Catholics, the Curé and the Proteſtant Miniſter aſcended together one altar, which

which had been erected by the citizens, and adminiſtered the oath to their reſpective pariſhioners at the ſame moment, after which, Catholics and Proteſtants joined in ſinging Te Deum.

Surely religious worſhip was never performed more truly in the ſpirit of the Divine author of Chriſtianity, whoſe great precept is that of univerſal love! Surely the incenſe of praiſe was never more likely to aſcend to heaven, than when the Catholics and Proteſtants of Negre-Peliſſe offered it together!

This amiable community, when their devotions were finiſhed, walked in proceſſion to a ſpot where fire works had been prepared; and, it being conſidered as a mark of honour to light the fire-works, the office was reſerved for Monſ. le Curé, who, however, inſiſted on the participation of the proteſtant Miniſter in this diſtinction; upon which the Miniſter received a wax taper from the Curé, and with him led the proceſſion. The fire-works repreſented two trees. One, twiſted and diſtorted, was emblematical of ariſtocracy, and was ſoon entirely conſumed; when a tall ſtraight plant, figurative of patriotiſm, appeared to riſe from the aſhes of the former, and continued to burn with undiminiſhed ſplendour.

When we look back on the ignorance, the ſuperſtition, the barbarous perſecutions of Gothic times, is it not ſomething to be thankful for, that we exiſt at this enlightened period, when ſuch evils are no more; when particular tenets of religious belief are no longer imputed as crimes; when the human mind has made as many important diſcoveries in morality as in ſcience, and liberality

berality of ſentiment is cultivated with as much ſucceſs as arts and learning; when, in ſhort, (and *you* are not one of thoſe who will ſuſpect that I am not all the while a good Engliſhwoman) when one can witneſs an event ſo ſublime as the French revolution?

LETTER IX.

YESTERDAY I received your letter, in which you accuſe me of deſcribing with too much enthuſiaſm the public rejoicings in France, and propheſy that I ſhall return to my own country a fierce republican. In anſwer to theſe accuſations, I ſhall only obſerve, that it is very difficult, with common ſenſibility, to avoid ſympathizing in general happineſs. My love of the French revolution, is the natural reſult of this ſympathy, and therefore my political creed is entirely an affair of the heart; for I have not been ſo abſurd as to conſult my head upon matters of which it is ſo incapable of judging. If I were at Rome, you would not be ſurprized to hear that I had viſited, with the warmeſt reverence, every ſpot where any relics of her antient grandeur could be traced; that I had flown to the capitol, that I had kiſſed the earth on which the Roman ſenate ſat in council: And can you then expect me to have ſeen the Federation at the

Champ

Champ de Mars, and the National Aſſembly of France, with indifference? Before you inſiſt that I ought to have done ſo, point out to me, in the page of Roman hiſtory, a ſpectacle more ſolemn, more affecting, than the Champ de Mars exhibited, or more magnanimous, more noble efforts in the cauſe of liberty than have been made by the National Aſſembly. Whether the new form of government, eſtabliſhing in France, be more or leſs perfect than our own,

"Who ſhall decide when doctors diſagree,
"And ſoundeſt caſuiſts doubt, like you and me?"

I fancy we had better leave the determination of this queſtion in the hands of poſterity. In the mean time, I wiſh that ſome of our political critics would ſpeak with leſs contempt, than they are apt to do, of the new conſtitution of France, and no longer repeat after one another the trite remark, that the French have gone too far, becauſe they have gone farther than ourſelves; as if it were not poſſible that that degree of influence which is perfectly ſafe in the hand of the executive part of our government, might be dangerous, at this criſis, to the liberty of France But be this as it may, it appears evident that the temple of Freedom which they are erecting, even if imperfect in ſome of its proportions, muſt be preferable to the old gloomy Gothic fabric which they have laid in ruins. And therefore, when I hear my good countrymen, who guard their own rights with ſuch unremitting vigilance, and who would rather part with life than liberty, ſpeak with contempt of the French for having imbibed the noble leſſon which England

land has taught, I cannot but ſuſpect that ſome mean jealouſy lurks beneath the ungenerous cenſure. I cannot but ſuſpect, that, while the fair and honourable traders of our commercial country act with the moſt liberal ſpirit in their ordinary dealings with other nations, they wiſh to make a monopoly of liberty, and are angry that France ſhould claim a ſhare of that precious property; by which, however, ſhe may ſurely be enriched, without our being impoveriſhed. The French, on the contrary, ſeem to have imbibed, with the principles of liberty, the ſtrongeſt ſentiments of reſpect and friendſhip towards that people, whom they gratefully acknowledge to have been their maſters in this ſcience. They are, to uſe their own phraſe, * "devenus fous des Anglois," and fondly imagine that the applauſe they have received from a ſociety of philoſophers in our country, is the general voice of the nation.

Whether the new conſtitution be compoſed of durable materials or not, I leave to politicians to determine; but it requires no extraordinary ſagacity to pronounce, that the French will henceforth be free. The love of liberty has pervaded all ranks of the people, who, if its bleſſings muſt be purchaſed with blood, will not ſhrink from paying the price:

"While ev'n the peaſant boaſts his right to ſcan,
"And learns to venerate himſelf as man."

The enthuſiaſtic ſpirit of liberty diſplays itſelf, not merely on the days of ſolemn ceremonies—occupies not only every ſerious deliberation—

* Become madly fond of the Engliſh.

but

but is mingled with the gaiety of ſocial enjoyment. When they converſe, liberty is the theme of diſcourſe; when they dance, the figure of the cotillon is adapted to a national tune; and when they ſing, it is but to repeat a vow of fidelity to the conſtitution, at which all who are preſent inſtantly join in chorus, and ſportively lift up their hands in confirmation of this favourite ſentiment.

In every ſtreet, you ſee children performing the military exerciſe, and carrying banners made of paper of the national colours, wearing grenadiers caps of the ſame compoſition, and armed, though not like Jack the Giant-killer, with ſwords of ſharpneſs.

Upon the whole, liberty appears in France adorned with the freſhneſs of youth, and is loved with the ardour of paſſion. In England ſhe is ſeen in her matron ſtate, and, like other ladies at that period, is beheld with ſober veneration.

With reſpect to myſelf, I muſt acknowledge, that, in my admiration of the revolution in France, I blend the feelings of private friendſhip with my ſympathy in public bleſſings; ſince the old conſtitution is connected in my mind with the image of a friend confined in the gloomy receſſes of a dungeon, and pining in hopeleſs captivity; while, with the new conſtitution, I unite with the ſoothing idea of his return to poſterity, honours, and happineſs.

This perſon is Monſ. du F——, whoſe lady I am come to France to viſit. They are friends with whom I wept in the day of their adverſity, and with whom in their proſperity I have haſtened to rejoice. Their hiſtory is moſt affecting;

ing; and, when I leave the hurry of Paris, to accompany them to their Chateau in Normandy, I will make you acquainted with incidents as pathetic as romance itſelf can furniſh. Adieu!

LETTER X.

WE have been driving at a furious rate, for ſeveral days paſt, through the city of Paris, which I think bears the ſame reſemblance to London (if you will allow me the indulgence of a ſimile) that the grand natural objects in a rude and barren country bear to the tame but regular beauties of a ſcene rich with cultivation. The ſtreets of Paris are narrow, dark, and dirty; but we are repaid for this by noble edifices, which powerfully intereſt the attention. The ſtreets of London are broad, airy, light, and elegant; but I need not tell you that they lead ſcarcely to any edifices at which foreigners do not look with contempt. London has, therefore, moſt of the beautiful, and Paris of the ſublime, according to Mr. Burke's definition of theſe qualities; for I aſſure you a ſenſation of terror is not wanting to the ſublimity of Paris, while the coachman drives through the ſtreets with the impetuoſity of a Frenchman, and one expects every ſtep the horſes take will be fatal to the foot paſſengers, who are heard exclaiming, "Que

*"Que les rues de Paris ſont ariſtocrates." By the way, *ariſtocracie*, and *à la nation*, are become cant terms, which, as *Sterne* ſaid of *tant pis*, and *tant mieux*, may now be conſidered as two of the great hinges in French converſation. Every thing tireſome or unpleaſant, "c'eſt une ariſtocracie!" and every thing charming and agreeable is, "à la nation."

I have ſeen all the fine buildings at Paris, and fancy I ſhould have admired the façade of the Louvre, the beautiful new church of Genevieve, and ſome other edifices, even if I had not been told previouſly, by a connoiſſeur in theſe matters, the preciſe degree of admiration which it was proper to beſtow on every public building in Paris: but, having received ſuch minute inſtructions on this ſubject, I can form but an imperfect notion of my own taſte for architecture.

At the requeſt of Madame Brulart, Monſ. de Chartres ſent orders for our admiſſion to the Palais Royal, which is not at preſent ſhewn to the public. Of the collection of pictures I am incapable of ſaying any thing, and enough has been already ſaid by thoſe who underſtand its merits. Fine painting gives me conſiderable pleaſure, but has not the power of calling forth my ſenſibility like fine poetry; and I am willing to believe that the art I love is the moſt perfect of the two; and that it would have been impoſſible for the pencil of Raphael to convey all thoſe ideas to the mind, and excite all thoſe emotions in the heart, which are awakened by the pen of Shakeſpeare.

* That the ſtreets of Paris are ariſtocrates.

I confeſs,

I confeſs, the only picture in Paris which has coſt mé any tears, is that of La Valliere, in the convent of the Carmelites. She is repreſented in the habit of a Carmelite; all the former ornaments of her perſon lie ſcattered at her feet; and her eyes are caſt up to Heaven with a look of the deepeſt anguiſh. While I gazed at her picture, I lamented that ſenſibility which led into the moſt fatal errors a mind that ſeems to have been formed for virtue, and which, even in the boſom of pleaſure, bewailed its own weakneſs. How can one forbear regretting, that the capricious inconſtant monarch, to whom ſhe gave her heart, ſhould have inſpired a paſſion of which he was ſo unworthy; a paſſion which appears to have been wholly unmixed with intereſt, vanity, or ambition? And how can one avoid pitying the deſolate penitent, who, for ſo many years, in the diſmal gloom of a convent, deplored her errors, and felt at once the bitterneſs of remorſe, and the agony of diſappointed love? while, probably,

"In every hymn ſhe ſeem'd his voice to hear,
"And dropt with every bead, too ſoft a tear!"

If the figure of this beautiful Carmelite had not come acroſs my imagination, I ſhould have told you ſooner, that the Palais Royal is a ſquare, of which the Duc de Orleans's palace forms one ſide. You walk under piazzas round this ſquare, which is ſurrounded with coffee-houſes, and ſhops diſplaying a variety of ribbons, trinkets, and caricature prints, which are now as common at Paris as at London. The walks under the piazzas are crouded with people, and in the upper part of the ſquare, tents are placed, where coffee,

coffee, lemonade, ices, &c. are ſold. Nothing is heard but the voice of mirth; nothing is ſeen but chearful faces; and I have no doubt that the Palais Royal is, upon the whole, one of the merrieſt ſcenes under the ſun. Indeed, what is moſt ſtriking to a ſtranger at Paris, is that general appearance of gaiety, which it is eaſy to perceive is not aſſumed for the moment, but is the habit of the mind, and which is, therefore, ſo exhilarating to a ſpectator of any benevolence. It is this which gives ſuch a charm to every public place and walk in Paris. Kenſington Gardens can boaſt as fine verdure, as majeſtic trees, as noble walks, and perhaps more beautiful women than the gardens of the Tuilleries, but we ſhall look in vain for that ſprightly animation, that everlaſting chearfulneſs, which render the Tuilleries ſo enchanting.

We have juſt returned from the Hoſpital des Invalides, a noble building, adorned with fine paintings which record the hiſtory of ſome celebrated ſaints, whoſe exploits were recounted with incredible rapidity by the man who conducted us through the chapels, and who ſeemed to think that nothing could be more abſurd than our curioſity, after having heard theſe ſtories from his lips, to obſerve how they were told by the painters.

As we paſſed through the church, we ſaw ſeveral old ſoldiers kneeling at the confeſſionals, with that ſolemn devotion which ſeemed undiſturbed by our intruſion, and fixed upon "the things that are above."

A few days before the taking of the Baſtille, a croud of the Pariſians aſſembled at the Hopital des

des Invalides, and demanded arms of the old ſoldiers; who anſwered, that they were the friends of their fellow citizens, but durſt not deliver up their arms without the appearance of a conteſt: and therefore deſired that the people would aſſemble before the gates in greater numbers the next day, when, after firing a little powder upon them, they would throw down their arms. The people accordingly returned the following day; and the invalids, after a faint ſhew of reſiſtance, threw down their arms, which the citizens took up, embraced the old men, and then departed.

We ſtopped yeſterday at La Maiſon de Ville, and went into a large apartment where the mayor and corporation aſſemble. The walls are hung round with pictures of Kings and Dukes, which I looked at with much leſs reſpect than at the chair on which Monſ. Bailly ſits. If his picture ſhould ever be placed in this apartment, I fancy that, in the eſtimation of poſterity, it will obtain precedency over all the Princes in the collection.

As we came out of La Maiſon de Ville, we were ſhewn, immediately oppoſite, the far-famed * lanterne, at which, for want of a gallows, the firſt victims of popular fury were ſacrificed. I own that the ſight of La Lanterne chilled the blood within my veins. At that moment, for the firſt time, I lamented the revolution; and, forgetting the imprudence, or the guilt, of thoſe unfortunate men, could only reflect with horror on the dreadful expiation they

* The lamp-iron.

had

had made. I painted in my imagination the agonies of their families and friends, nor could I for a conſiderable time chaſe theſe gloomy images from my thoughts.

It is for ever to be regretted, that ſo dark a ſhade of ferocious revenge was thrown acroſs the glories of the revolution. But, alas! where do the records of hiſtory point out a revolution unſtained by ſome actions of barbarity? When do the paſſions of human nature riſe to that pitch which produces great events, without wandering into ſome irregularities? If the French revolution ſhould coſt no farther bloodſhed, it muſt be allowed, notwithſtanding a few ſhocking inſtances of public vengeance, that the liberty of twenty-four millions of people will have been purchaſed at a far cheaper rate than could ever have been expected from the former experience of the world.

LETTER XI.

WE are juſt returned from Verſailles, where I could not help fancying I ſaw, in the back ground of that magnificent abode of a deſpot, the gloomy dungeons of the Baſtille, which ſtill haunt my imagination, and prevented my being much dazzled by the ſplendour of this ſuperb palace.

We

We were ſhewn the paſſages through which the Queen eſcaped from her own apartment to the King's, on the memorable night when the *Poiſſardes* viſited Verſailles, and alſo the balcony at which ſhe ſtood with the Dauphin in her arms, when, after having remained a few hours concealed in ſome ſecret receſs of the palace, it was thought proper to comply with the deſire of the croud, who repeatedly demanded her preſence. I could not help moralizing a little, on being told that the apartment to which this balcony belongs, is the very room in which Louis the Fourteenth died; little ſuſpecting what a ſcene would, in the courſe of a few years, be acted on that ſpot.

All the bread which could be procured in the town of Verſailles, was diſtributed among the *Poiſſardes*; who, with ſavage ferocity, held up their morſels of bread on their bloody pikes, towards the balcony where the Queen ſtood, crying, in a tone of defiance, *"Nous avons du pain."

During the whole of the journey from Verſailles to Paris, the Queen held the Dauphin in her arms, who had been previouſly taught to put his infant hands together, and attempt to ſoften the enraged multitude by repeating, †"Grace pour maman!"

Monſ. de la Fayette prevented the whole Gardes du Corps from being maſſacred at Verſailles, by calling to the incenſed people, ‡"Le Roi vous demande grace pour ſes Gardes du Corps."

* We now have bread. † Spare mama!
‡ The King begs of you to ſpare his body-guards.

Corps." The voice of Monſ. de la Fayette was liſtened to, and obeyed. The Gardes du Corps were ſpared; with whom, before they ſet out for Paris, the people exchanged clothes, giving them alſo national cockades; and as a farther protection from danger, part of the croud mounted on the horſes of the Gardes du Corps, each man taking an officer behind him. Before the King came out of La Maiſon de Ville, Monſ. de la Fayette appeared, and told the multitude, who had preſerved an indignant ſilence the whole way from Verſailles to Paris, that the King had expreſſed ſentiments of the ſtrongeſt affection for his people, and had accepted the national cockade; and that he (Monſ. de la Fayette) hoped, when his Majeſty came out of la Maiſon de Ville, they would teſtify their gratitude. In a few minutes the King appeared, and was received with the loudeſt acclamations.

When the Queen was lately aſked to give her depoſition on the attempt which, it is ſaid, was made to aſſaſſinate her, by the *Poiſſardes* at Verſailles, ſhe anſwered, with great prudence, "* Jai tout vu, tout entendu, et tout oublié!"

The King is now extremely popular, and the people ſing in the ſtreets to the old tune of "† Vive Henri quatre! &c." "Vive Louis ſeize!"

The Queen is, I am told, much altered lately in her appearance, but ſhe is ſtill a fine woman.

* I ſaw every thing, heard every thing, and have forgot every thing.

† Long live Henry the fourth. Long live Lewis the Sixteenth.

Madame is a beautiful girl; and the Dauphin, who is about ſeven years of age, is the idol of the people. They expect that he will be educated in the principles of the new conſtitution, and will be taught to conſider himſelf leſs a king than a citizen. He appears to be a ſweet engaging child, and I have juſt heard one of his ſayings repeated. He has a collection of animals, which he feeds with his own hand. A few days ago, an ungrateful rabbit, who was his firſt favourite, bit his finger when he was giving him food. The Prince, while ſmarting with the pain, called out to his * petit lapin, "Tu ès Ariſtocrate." One of the attendants enquired, "Eh! Monſeigneur, qu'eſt-ce que c'eſt qu'un Ariſtocrate." "Ce ſont ceux," anſwered the Prince, "qui font de la peine à Papa."

The King lately called the Queen, en badinage, Madame Capet; to which ſhe retorted very readily, by giving his Majeſty the appellation of "Monſieur † *Capot*."

When Les gardes Francoiſes laid down their arms at Verſailles, their officers endeavoured to perſuade them to take them up. An officer of my acquaintance told me, that he ſaid to his ſoldiers, ‡ "Mes enfans, vous allez donc me

* Little rabbit, Thou art an Ariſtocrate.——And pray, my Lord, what is an Ariſtocrate?——Thoſe who make my papa uneaſy.

† Capot is the French term at picquet, when the game is loſt.

‡ My friends, you are going then to forſake me; I poſſeſs none of your affection——Captain, they anſwered, we all love you; and, if you will lead us againſt our enemies, we are all ready to follow you: but we will never fire at our fellow citizens.

quitter,

quitter, vous ne m'aimez plus?" "Mon officier," they anſwered, "nous vous aimons tous, ſi il s'agit d'aller contre nos ennemis, nous ſommes tous prets à vous ſuivre, mais nous ne tirerons jamais contre nos compatriotes." Since that period, whenever any of les gardes Francoiſes appear, they are followed by the acclamations of the people, and "* Vive les Gardes Francoiſes!" reſounds from every quarter.

While we were ſitting, after dinner, at the inn at Verſailles, the door was ſuddenly opened, and a Franciſcan friar entered the room. He had ſo ſtrong a reſemblance to Sterne's monk, that I am perſuaded he muſt be a deſcendant of the ſame family. We could not, like Sterne, beſtow immortality; but we gave ſome alms: and the venerable old monk, after thanking us with affecting ſimplicity, added, ſpreading out his hands with a ſlow and ſolemn movement," † "Que la paix ſoit avec vous," and then departed. I have been frequently put in mind of Sterne ſince my arrival in France; and the firſt poſt-boy I ſaw in jack-boots, appeared to me a very claſſical figure, by recalling the idea of La Fleur mounted on his bidet.

* Long live the French guards.
† Peace be with you.

LETTER XII.

WE have been at all the Theatres, and I am charmed with the comic actors. The tragic performers afforded me much leſs pleaſure. Before we can admire Madame Veſtris, the firſt tragic actreſs of Paris, we muſt have loſt the impreſſion (a thing impoſſible) of Mrs. Siddons's performance; who, inſtead of "tearing a paſſion to rage," like Madame Veſtris, only tears the hearts of the audience with ſympathy.

Moſt of the pieces we have ſeen at the French theatres have been little comedies relative to the circumſtances of the times, and, on that account, preferred, in this moment of enthuſiaſm, to all the wit of Moliere. Theſe little pieces might perhaps read coldly enough in your ſtudy, but have a moſt charming effect with an accompanyment of applauſe from ſome hundreds of the national guards, the real actors in the ſcenes repreſented. Between the acts national ſongs are played, in which the whole audience join in chorus. There is one air, in particular, which is ſo univerſal a favourite, that it is called "Le Carrillon Nâtional:" the burden of the ſong is * "C'a ira." It is ſung not only at every theatre, and in every ſtreet of Paris, but in every town and village of France, by man, woman, and child. "C'a ira" is every where the ſignal of pleaſure, the beloved ſound which ani-

* I will go on.

mates

mates every boſom with delight, and of which every ear is enamoured. And I have heard the moſt ſerious political converſations end by a ſportive aſſurance, in alluſion to this ſong, que "C'a ira!"

Giornowiche, the celebrated player on the violin, who was ſo much the faſhion laſt winter at London, I am told, ſometimes amuſed himſelf at Paris, by getting up into one of the trees of the Palais Royal, after it was dark, and calling forth tones from his violin, fit to "take the priſon'd ſoul, and lap it in Elyſium." He has frequently detained ſome thouſands of people half the night in the Palais Royal, who, before they diſcovered the performer, uſed to call out in rapture, "Bravo, bravo: *c'eſt mieux que Giornowiche."

I am juſt returned from ſeeing the Gobelin tapeſtry, which appears the work of magic. It gave me pleaſure to ſee two pictures of Henry the Fourth. In one he is placed at ſupper with the miller's family; and in the other, he is embracing Sully, who is brought forward on a couch, after having been wounded in battle. Nothing has afforded me more delight, ſince I came to France, than the honours which are paid to my favourite hero, Henry the Fourth, whom I prefer to all the Alexanders and Frederics that ever exiſted. They may be terribly ſublime, if you will, and have great claims to my admiration; but as for my love, all that portion of it which I beſtow on heroes, is already in Henry's poſſeſſion.

* This is better than Giornowiche.

Little

Little ſtatues of Henry the Fourth and Sully are very common. Sully is repreſented kneeling at the feet of this amiable Prince, who holds out his hand to him; and on the baſe of the ſtatue, are written the words which Sully records in his Memoirs: *" Mais levez vous, levez vous donc, Sully, on croiroit que je vous pardonne."

While the ſtatue of Henry the Fourth, on the Pont Neuf, is illuminated and decorated with national ribbon, that of Louis the Fourteenth, in the Place Victoire, is ſtripped of its former oſtentatious ornaments; the nations, which were repreſented enchained at his feet, having been removed ſince the revolution. The figure of Fame is, however, ſtill left hovering behind the ſtatue of the King, with a crown of laurel in her hand, which it is generally ſuppoſed, ſhe is going to place upon his head. But I have heard of a French wit, who enquired whether it was really her intention to place the laurel on his Majeſty's head, or whether ſhe had juſt taken it off.

In our ride this morning, we ſtopped at the Place Royal, where I was diverted by reading, on the front of a little ſhop under the piazzas, theſe words: " Robelin, † ecrivain.—Memoires et lettres écrites à juſte prix, à la nation." I am told, that Monſ. Robelin is in very flouriſhing buſineſs; and perhaps I might have had re-

* But riſe, pray riſe, Sully; they will believe I am forgiving you.

† Writer.——Memoirs and letters written at a moderate price, for the Nation.

courſe

courſe to him for aſſiſtance in my correſpondence with you, if I did not leave Paris to-morrow. You ſhall hear from me from Rouen.

LETTER XIII.

WE had a moſt agreeable journey from Paris to Rouen, travelling a hundred miles along the borders of the Seine, through a beautiful country, richly wooded, and finely diverſified by hill and valley. We paſſed ſeveral magnificent chateaus, and ſaw many a ſpire belonging to Gothic edifices, which, it would ſeem, were built of ſuch laſting materials, with the moral purpoſe of leading the mind to reflect on the comparatively ſhort duration of human life. Frequently an old venerable croſs, placed at the ſide of the road by the piety of remote ages, and never paſſed by Roman Catholics without ſome mark of reſpect, throws a kind of religious ſanctity over the landſcape.

We ſtopped to look at the immenſe machine which conveys water to Verſailles and Marly. The water is raiſed, by means of this machine, ſixty feet, and is carried the diſtance of five hundred. I never heard a ſound which filled my mind with more horror than the noiſe occaſioned by the movements of this tremendous machine; while, at the ſame time, the vaſt chaſms, where the

the water foams with angry violence, make the brain giddy, and I was glad to leave these images of terror.

Part of our journey was performed by moonlight, which slept most sweetly upon the bank, and spread over the landscape those softened graces which I will not attempt to describe, lest my pen should stray into rhyme.

We passed the chateau of Rosni, a noble domain given to Sully by Henry the Fourth; a testimony of that friendship which reflects equal honour on the King and the Minister.

About three leagues from Rouen stands a convent, of which Abelard was for some time the superior. It is still inhabited by a few monks, and is called Le Convent de deux Amans. Had it been the monastery of the Paraclete, the residence of Eloisa, I should have hastened to visit the spot,

"Where, o'er the twilight groves and dusky caves,
"Long sounding isles, and intermingled graves,
"Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
"A death-like silence, and a dread repose;
"Her gloomy presence saddens all the scene,
"Shades ev'ry flow'r, and darkens ev'ry green,
"Deepens the murmur of the falling floods,
"And breathes a browner horror on the woods."

If it were not very difficult to be angry with such a poet as Pope, particularly after having just transcribed these exquisite lines, I should be so when I recollect how clearly Mr. Berington shows, in his History of Abelard and Eloisa, the cruel injustice done by Pope to the sentiments of Eloisa, who is too often made to speak a very different language in the poem, from that of her genuine letters.

On

On our way to Rouen we ſlept at Gallon, a town about five leagues diſtant. Our inn was cloſe to the caſtle, which formerly belonged to the Archbiſhop of Rouen, and which is now the property of the nation. The caſtle is a venerable gothic building, with a fine orangery, and parks which extend ſeveral leagues. The Archbiſhop, who is the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault, brother to that diſtinguiſhed patriot the ci-devant Duc de la Rochefoucault, has loſt a very conſiderable revenue ſince the revolution. He had an immenſe train of ſervants, whom it is ſaid he diſmiſſed, upon the diminution of his income, with all poſſible gentleneſs, giving horſes to one, a carriage to another, and endeavouring to beſtow on all ſome little alleviation of the pain they felt at quitting ſo good a maſter. It is impoſſible not to regret that the property of the Cardinal de la Rochefoucault is diminiſhed, by whom it was only employed in diſpenſing happineſs.

After viſiting the caſtle, I returned ſomewhat in mournful mood to the inn, where there was nothing calculated to convey one chearful idea. The cieling of our apartment was croſſed with old bare beams; the tapeſtry, with which the room was hung, diſplayed, like the dreſs of Otway's old woman, "variety of wretchedneſs;" the canopied beds were of coarſe dirty ſtuff: two pictures, in tawdry gilt frames, ſlandered the ſweet countenances of the Dauphin and Madame; and the floor was paved with brick. In ſhort, one can ſcarcely imagine a ſcene more remote from England, in accommodation and comfort, than the country inns of France: yet,

in this habitation, where an Engliſhman would have been inclined to hang himſelf, was my reſt diſturbed half the night by the merry ſongs which were ſung in an adjoining apartment, as gloomy as my own. But thoſe local circumſtances, which affect Engliſh nerves, never diſturb the peace of that happy people, by whom, whether engaged in taking the Baſtille, or ſitting with their friends after ſupper, * tout ſe fait en chantant.

LETTER XIV.

ROUEN is one of the largeſt and moſt commercial towns of France. It is ſituated on the banks of the Seine, has a fine quay, and a ſingular bridge, of barges placed cloſe together, with planks fixed upon them: the bridge riſes and ſinks with the tide, and opens for veſſels to paſs.

The ſtreets of Rouen are ſo narrow, dark, and frightful, that, to borrow an expreſſion from Madame Sevigné, † "elles abuſent de la permiſſion qu'ont les rues Françoiſes d'etre laides." There are many figures of Saints to be ſeen

* Every thing is done ſinging.

† "They abuſe the permiſſion the French ſtreets have of being ugly."

from

from theſe ugly ſtreets, placed in little niches in the walls. The Virgin Mary is ſeated in one of theſe niches, with the infant in her arms; and in the neighbourhood is St. Anne, who has the credit of having taught the Virgin to read. Every night the general darkneſs of the town is a little diſpelled by the lamps which the people place in the niches, * " pour eclairer les Saints."

Rouen is ſurrounded by ſome boulevards, that form very beautiful walks. On the top of the hill of St. Catharine, which overlooks the town, are the ruins of a fort called St. Michell, from which Henry the Fourth beſieged Rouen. I love to be put in mind of Henry the Fourth, and am therefore very well pleaſed, that whenever I go to walk, I can fix my eyes on the hill of St. Catharine.

I always feel a little aſhamed of my country, when I paſs the ſpot where the Maid of Orleans was executed, and on which her ſtatue ſtands, a monument of our diſgrace. The aſhes of her perſecutor, John Duke of Bedford, repoſe at no great diſtance, within a tomb of black marble, in the cathedral, which was built by the Engliſh. One cannot feel much reſpect for the judgment of our anceſtors, in chuſing, of all places under the ſun, the cathedral of Rouen for the tomb of him whoſe name is tranſmitted to us with the epithet of the *good* Duke of Bedford: for you have ſcarcely left the cathedral, before the ſtatue of Jeane d'Arc ſtares you in the face, and ſeems to caſt a moſt formidable ſhade over the *good* Duke's virtues.

* " To light the Saints."

The

The cathedral is a very magnificent edifice, and the great bell is ten feet high, and weighs thirty-ſix thouſand pounds. But in France it is not what is *antient*, but what is *modern*, that moſt powerfully engages attention. Nothing in this fine old cathedral intereſted me ſo much as the conſecrated banner, which ſince the Federation, has been placed over the altar, and on which is inſcribed, " * Vivons libres, ou mourons!" I hope every Frenchman, who enters the cathedral of Rouen, while he reads the inſcription on this conſecrated banner, repeats from the bottom of his ſoul, " Vivons libres, ou mourons!" But the French will, I truſt, eſcape the horrors of civil war, notwithſtanding the gloomy forebodings of the enemies of the new conſtitution.

A people juſt delivered from the yoke of oppreſſion, will ſurely have little inclination to reſume their ſhackles; to rebuild the dungeons they have ſo lately demoliſhed; to cloſe again thoſe gloomy monaſtic gates which are now thrown open; to exchange their new courts of judicature, founded on the baſis of juſtice and humanity, for the caprice of power, and the dark iniquity of letters de cachet; to quench the fair ſtar of liberty, which has ariſen on their hemiſphere, and ſuffer themſelves to be once more guided by the meteor of deſpotiſm.

A very conſiderable number, even among the nobility of France, have had the virtue to ſupport the cauſe of freedom; and, forgetting the

* Let us live free, or die!

little

little conſiderations of vanity, which have ſome importance in the ordinary courſe of human affairs, but which are loſt and annihilated when ther mind is animated by any great ſentiment, they have choſen to become the benefactors rather than the oppreſſors of their country; the citizens of a free ſtate, inſtead of the ſlaves of a deſpotic monarch. They will no longer bear arms to gratify the ambition, or the caprice of a miniſter; they will no longer exert that impetuous and gallant ſpirit, for which they have ever been diſtinguiſhed, in any cauſe unworthy of its efforts. The fire of valour, which they have too often employed for the purpoſes of deſtruction, will henceforth be directed to more generous ends. They will chuſe another path to renown. Inſtead of attempting to take the citadel of glory by ſtorm, they will prefer the fame of an honourable defence, and, renouncing the ſanguinary laurel, ſtrive, with more exalted enthuſiaſm, to obtain the civic wreath. Yes, the French nation will inviolably guard, will tranſmit to poſterity the ſacred rights of freedom. Future ages will celebrate, with grateful commemoration, the fourteenth of July; and ſtrangers, when they viſit France, will haſten with impatience to the Champ de Mars, filled with that enthuſiaſm which is awakened by the view of a place where any great ſcene has been acted. I think I hear them exclaim, "Here the Federation was held! here an aſſembled nation devoted themſelves to freedom!" I fancy I ſee them pointing out the ſpot on which the altar of the country ſtood. I ſee them eagerly ſearching for the place where they have heard it recorded,

that

that the National Aſſembly were ſeated! I think of theſe things, and then repeat to myſelf with tranſport, "*I*, was a ſpectator of the Federation!"

But theſe meditations have led me to travel through the ſpace of ſo many centuries, that it is really difficult to get back again to the preſent times. Did you expect that I ſhould ever dip my pen in politics, who uſed to take ſo ſmall an intereſt in public affairs, that I recollect a gentleman of my acquaintance ſurprized me not a little, by informing me of the war between the Turks and the Ruſſians, at a time when all the people of Europe, except myſelf, had been two years in poſſeſſion of this intelligence?

If, however, my love of the French revolution requires an apology, you ſhall receive one in a very ſhort time; for I am going to Monſ. du F——'s chateau, and will ſend you from thence the hiſtory of his misfortunes. They were the inflictions of tyranny, and you will rejoice with me that tyranny is no more.

Before I cloſe my letter, I ſhall mention a ſingular privilege of the church of Rouen, which is the power of ſetting free a murderer every year on the day of Aſcenſion. It ſeems that in the time of King Dagobert, who reigned in the ſixth century, a horrible and unrelenting dragon deſolated the country, ſparing neither man nor beaſt. St. Romain, who was then biſhop of Rouen, aſked for two criminals to aſſiſt him in an enterprize he had the courage to meditate againſt the dragon; and with theſe aides de camp he ſallied forth, killed the monſter, and delivered the country. In conſequence of this

this miracle, Dagobert gave the ſucceſſors of St. Romain the privilege of ſetting a murderer free every year on Aſcenſion-day. The bones of St. Romain are carried by the criminal in a gilt box through the ſtreets: the figure of a hideous animal repreſenting the dragon, though it is ſuſpected of ſlandering his countenance, accompanies theſe venerable bones. and has generally a young living wolf placed in its maw, except when it is * jour maigre, and then the dragon is provided with a large fiſh. The counſellors of the parliament, dreſſed in their ſcarlet robes, attend this proceſſion to a church, where high maſs is ſaid; and, theſe ceremonies being performed, the criminal is ſet at liberty. But it is only when there are ſome ſtrong alleviating circumſtances in the caſe of the offender, that he is ſuffered in this manner to evade the puniſhment of his crimes.

Yeſterday, in a little town called Sotte Ville, joined to Rouen by the bridge, a political diſpute aroſe between the Curé and his pariſhioners. The enraged Curé exclaimed, † "Vous êtes une aſſemblée d'anes." To which one of the pariſhioners anſwered, with great calmneſs, ‡ "Oui, Monſ. le Curé, et vous en êtes le paſteur."

* Faſt-day.
† You are an aſſembly of aſſes.
‡ Yes, Sir, and you are our preacher.

LETTER

LETTER XV.

I HEARD * La meſſe militaire, on Sunday laſt, at a church where all the national guard of Rouen attended. The ſervice began with the loudeſt thunder of drums and trumpets, and ſeemed more like a ſignal for battle than for devotion; but the muſic ſoon ſoftened into the moſt ſoothing ſounds, which flowed from the organ, clarinets, flutes and hautboys; the prieſts chanted, and the people made reſponſes. The wax tapers were lighted, holy water was ſprinkled on the ground, incenſe was burnt at the altar, and the elevation of the hoſt was announced by the ſound of the drum; upon which the people knelt down, and the prieſt proſtrated his face towards the earth. There is ſomething affecting in the pomp and ſolemnity of theſe ceremonies. Indeed, the Roman Catholic worſhip, though a ſad ſtumbling-block to reaſon, is ſtriking to the imagination. I have more than once heard the ſervice for the dead performed, and never can hear it without emotion; without feeling that in thoſe melancholy ſeparations, which bury every hope of the ſurvivor in the relentleſs grave, the heart that can delude itſelf with the belief, that its prayers may avail any thing to the departed object of its affections, muſt find conſolation in thus uniting a tribute of tenderneſs, with the performance of a religious duty.

* The military maſs.

We

We have been at ſeveral convents at Rouen. The firſt to which we went was a convent of benedictine nuns. When we had entered the gates we rang a bell, and a ſervant appeared, and deſired us to go up ſtairs to the parloir. We opened a wrong door, and found, in a room grated acroſs the middle with iron bars, a young man ſitting on one ſide of the grate, and a young nun on the other. I could not help thinking that the heart of this young man was placed in a perilous ſituation; for where can a young woman appear ſo intereſting, as when ſeen within that gloomy barrier, which death alone can remove? What is there, in all the oſtentation of female dreſs, ſo likely to affect a man of ſenſibility, as that diſmal habit which ſeems ſo much at variance with youth and beauty, and is worn as the melancholy ſymbol of an eternal renunciation of the world and all its pleaſures? We made an apology to the nun for our intruſion, and ſhe directed us to another apartment, where, a few minutes after we had ſeated ourſelves on one ſide of the grate, La Depoſitaire entered on the other, and told us that the Abbeſs, whom we had deſired to ſee, was not yet riſen from dinner, and La Depoſitaire hoped we would wait a little. * "Parceque," ſaid ſhe, "Madame l'Abbeſſe etoit obligée hier de ſe lever de table de bonne heure, et elle ſe trouvoit une peu incommodée." You muſt obſerve that the Abbeſſe dined at three o'clock, and it was now paſt ſix. At length this lady, who was ſo fond of long dinners, appeared.

* Becauſe, ſaid ſhe, the Abbeſs was obliged to riſe from table very ſoon yeſterday, and found herſelf a little indiſpoſed.

She

She is a woman of fifty, but is ſtill handſome; has a frank agreeable countenance, fine eyes, and had put on her veil in a very becoming manner. We wiſhed to be admitted to the interior part of the convent, and with this view a French gentleman, who was of our party, * "ſe mit à conter des hiſtoires à Madame l'Abbeſſe."

He told her that my ſiſter and I, though Engliſh women, were catholics, and wiſhed to be received into the convent, and even, if it had been poſſible, to take the vows. The Abbeſs enquired if he was quite ſure of our being catholics; upon which the gentleman, a little puzzled what to anſwer, inſinuated that Monſ. du F—— had probably the merit of our converſion. "But I have heard," ſaid the Abbeſs, "from Madame ——, that Monſ. du F—— has become a proteſtant himſelf." Monſ. du F——, who is truth itſelf, avowed his principles without heſitation; while the Abbeſs, turning to La Depoſitaire, exclaimed, † Mais commes Monſ. eſt aimable! quel beaux ſentiments! Ah Monſ. vous êtes trop bon pour que Dieu vous laiſſe dans l'erreur." "St. Auguſtin," continued ſhe, "had once ſome doubts; I hope you will be a ſecond St. Auguſtin: myſelf, and all my community, will pray for your converſion." La Depoſitaire, who was a tall thin old woman, with a ſharp malignant countenance, added, caſting a look on Monſ. du F—— full of the contempt of ſuperior knowledge, "It is not ſurprizing that a young man, after paſſing ſeveral years

* Told a great many fables to the Abbeſs.

† How amiable he is! what noble ſentiments! Ah, Sir, you are too good for God to leave you in error.

in

in England, that country of heretics, ſhould find his faith ſomewhat ſhaken; but he only wants to be enlightened by Monſ. le Curé de ——, who will immediately diſſipate all his doubts."

From the Convent of the Benedictines we went to that of the Carmelites, where religion, which was meant to be a ſource of happineſs in this world, as well as in the next, wears an aſpect of the moſt gloomy horror. When we entered the convent, it ſeemed the reſidence of ſilence and ſolitude: no voice was heard, no human creature appeared; and when we rang the bell, a perſon, whom we could not ſee, enquired, through a hole in the wall, what we wanted. On being informed that we wiſhed to ſpeak to the Superieure, putting her hand through the hole, ſhe gave us a key, and deſired us to unlock the door of the parloir. This we accordingly did; and in a few minutes the Superieure came to a thick double grate, with a curtain drawn at the inſide, to prevent the poſſibility of being ſeen. Our French gentleman again talked of our deſire to enter the convent, and begged to know the rules. A hollow voice anſwered, that the Carmelites roſe at four in the morning in ſummer, and five in winter:—"Obedient ſlumbers, that can wake and weep!"—That they ſlept in their coffins, upon ſtraw, and every morning dug a ſhovel-full of earth for their graves; that they walked to their devotional exerciſes upon their knees; that when any of their friends viſited them, if they ſpoke, they were not ſuffered to be ſeen, or if they were ſeen, they were not ſuffered to ſpeak; that with them it was * toujours maigre, and they only taſted food twice a day.

* Always a faſt.

Our

Our Frenchman ſaid, " † Il faut Madame que ces demoiſellès reflechiſſent, ſi cela leur convient." The poor Carmelite agreed that the matter required ſome reflection, and we departed.

As we returned home meditating on the lot of a Carmelite, we met in the ſtreet three nuns walking in the habit of their order. Upon enquiry, we were told that they had been forced by their parents to take the veil, and, ſince the decree of the National Aſſembly, giving them liberty, they had obtained permiſſion to pay a viſit for three months to ſome friends who ſympathized in their unhappineſs, and were now on their journey.

The monks and nuns muſt in a ſhort time decide whether they will finally leave their cloiſters or not; and the religious houſes which are vacated will be ſold. In the department of Rouen a calculation has been made, that, after paying every monk ſeven hundred, and every nun five hundred livres a year, out of the revenues of the religious houſes, the department will gain ſixty thouſand livres a year. The monks and nuns above ſixty years of age, who chuſe to leave their convents, will be allowed an annual penſion of nine hundred livres.

A letter was read in the National Aſſembly, a few days ago, from a prieſt, intreating that the clergy might have permiſſion to marry; a privilege which it is thought the Aſſembly will ſoon authorize. † " On a bouleverſé tout," ſaid an

* Theſe young ladies, Madam, muſt conſider whether theſe regulations will ſuit them.

† They have overturned every thing.

old

old Curé, a fierce Ariſtocrate, with whom I was in company, * " Et meme on veut porter la profanation ſi loin que de marier les pretres." It is conjectured, however, that the younger part of the clergy think of this meaſure with leſs horror than the old Curé.

We arrived laſt night at Monſ. du F——'s chateau, without having viſited, during our ſtay at Rouen, the tomb of William the Conqueror, who is buried at Caen, a town twelve leagues diſtant. But I have been too lately at the Champ de Mars, to travel twelve leagues in order to ſee the tomb of a tyrant.

Upon Monſ. du F——'s arrival at the chateau, all his tenants with their wives and daughters, came to pay their reſpects to Mon Seigneur, and were addreſſed by Monſ. and Madame with thoſe endearing epithets which give ſuch a charm to the French language, and are ſo much more rejoicing to the heart than our formal appellations. Here a peaſant girl is termed, by the lady of the chateau, * " Ma bonne amie, Ma petite, Mon enfant;" while thoſe pretty monoſyllables † tu, ta, &c. uſed only to the neareſt relations, and to ſervants, impreſs the mind with the idea of that affectionate familiarity, which ſo gracefully ſoftens the diſtance of ſituation, and excites in the dependant, not preſumption, but gratitude. ‡ Et comment te porte tu, La Voie?" ſaid Monſ. du F—— to one of his farmers. * Aſſez bien

* My good friend, My little girl, my child.
† Thou, thy, &c.
‡ And how do you do, La Voie?
* Pretty well, my Lord; but I had a fever laſt Eaſter, at your ſervice.

Mon

Mon Seigneur," replied he; " mais j'eus la fievre a Pacque, à votre ſervice."

LETTER XVI.

I EMBRACE the firſt hours of leiſure, which I have found ſince my arrival at the chateau, to ſend you the hiſtory of my friends.

Antoine Auguſtin Thomas du F——, eldeſt ſon of the Baron du F——, Counſellor of the Parliament of Normandy, was born on the fifteenth of July, 1750. His early years were embittered by the ſeverity of his father, who was of a diſpoſition that preferred the exerciſe of domeſtic tyranny to the bleſſings of ſocial happineſs, and choſe rather to be dreaded than beloved. The endearing name of father conveyed no tranſport to *his* heart, which, being wrapt up in ſtern inſenſibility, was cold even to the common feelings of nature.

The baron's auſterity was not indeed confined to his ſon, but extended to all his dependants. Formed by nature for the ſupport of the antient government of France, he maintained his ariſtocratic rights with unrelenting ſeverity, ruled his feudal tenures with a rod of iron, and conſidered the lower order of people as a ſet of beings whoſe exiſtence was tolerated merely for the uſe of the nobility. The poor, he believed, were only

only born for ſuffering; and he determined, as far as in him lay, not to deprive them of their natural inheritance. On the whole, if it were the great purpoſe of human life to be hated, perhaps no perſon ever attained that end more completely than the Baron Du F——.

His ſon diſcovered early a taſte for literature, and received an education ſuitable to his rank and fortune. As he advanced in life, the treatment he experienced from his father became more and more intolerable to him, as, far from inheriting the ſame character, he poſſeſſed the moſt amiable diſpoſitions, and the moſt feeling heart.

His mother, feeble alike in mind and body, ſubmitted with the helpleſsneſs, and almoſt with the thoughtleſsneſs of a child, to the imperious will of her huſband. Their family was increaſed by two more ſons, and two daughters; but theſe children, being ſeveral years younger than Monſ. Du F——, were not of an age to afford him the conſolations of friendſhip; and the young man would have found his ſituation intolerable, but for the ſympathy of a perſon, in whoſe ſociety every evil was forgotten.

This perſon, his attachment to whom has tinctured the colour of his life, was the youngeſt of eight children, of a reſpectable family of Bourgeois at Rouen. There is great reaſon to believe that her father was deſcended from the younger branch of a noble family of the ſame name, and bearing the ſame arms. But, unhappily, ſome links were wanting in this chain of honourable parentage. The claim to nobility could not be traced to the entire ſatisfaction of the Baron; who, though he would have diſpenſed

with any moral qualities in favour of rank, conſidered obſcure birth as a radical ſtain, which could not be wiped off by all the virtues under heaven. He looked upon marriage as merely a convention of intereſt, and children as a property, of which it was reaſonable for parents to make the moſt in their power.

The father of Mad^elle Monique C—— was a farmer, and died three months before the birth of this child; who, with ſeveral other children, was educated with the utmoſt care by their mother, a woman of ſenſe and virtue, beloved by all to whom ſhe was known. It ſeemed as if this reſpectable woman had, after the death of her huſband, only ſupported life for the ſake of her infant family, from whom ſhe was ſnatched by death, the moment her maternal cares became no longer neceſſary; her youngeſt daughter, Monique, having, at this period, juſt attained her twentieth year. Upon the death of her mother, Monique went to live with an aunt, with whom ſhe remained only a very ſhort time, being invited by Madame du F——, to whom ſhe was well known, to come and live with her as an humble companion, to read to her when ſhe was diſpoſed to liſten, and to enliven the ſullen grandeur of the chateau, by her animating vivacity.

This young perſon had cultivated her excellent underſtanding by reading, and her heart ſtood in no need of cultivation. Monſ. Du F—— found in the charms of her converſation, and in the ſympathy of her friendſhip, the moſt ſoothing conſolation under the rigor of parental tyranny. Living ſeveral years beneath the ſame

roof,

roof, he had conſtant opportunities of obſerving her diſpoſition and character; and the paſſion with which ſhe at length inſpired him, was founded on the laſting baſis of eſteem.

If it was ever pardonable to deviate from that law, in the code of intereſt and etiquette, which forbids the heart to liſten to its beſt emotions; which, ſtifling every generous ſentiment of pure diſintereſted attachment, ſacrifices love at the ſhrine of avarice or ambition; the virtues of Monique were ſuch as might excuſe this deviation. Yes, the character, the conduct of this amiable perſon, have nobly juſtified her lover's choice. How long might he have vainly ſought, in the higheſt claſſes of ſociety, a mind ſo elevated above the common maſs!—a mind that, endowed with the moſt exquiſite ſenſibility, has had ſufficient firmneſs to ſuſtain, with a calm and equal ſpirit, every tranſition of fortune; the moſt ſevere trials of adverſity, and perhaps what is ſtill more difficult to bear, the trial of high proſperity.

Monſ. Du F—— had been taught, by his early misfortunes, that domeſtic happineſs was the firſt good of life. He had already found, by experience, the inſufficiency of rank and fortune to confer enjoyment; and he determined to ſeek it in the boſom of conjugal felicity. He determined to paſs his life with her whoſe ſociety now ſeemed eſſential not only to his happineſs, but to his very exiſtence.

At the ſolemn hour of midnight, the young couple went to a church, where they were met by a prieſt whom Monſ. Du F—— had made

the confident of his attachment, and by whom the marriage ceremony was performed.

Some time after, when the ſituation of his wife obliged Monſ. Du F—— to acknowledge their marriage to his mother, ſhe aſſured her ſon that ſhe would willingly conſent to receive his wife as her daughter, but for the dread of his father's reſentment. Madame Du F——, with tears of regret, parted with Monique, whom ſhe placed under the protection of her brothers: they conducted her to Caen, where ſhe was ſoon after delivered of a ſon.

The Baron Du F—— was abſent while theſe things were paſſing; he had been ſuſpected of being the author of a pamphlet written againſt the princes of the blood, and an order was iſſued to ſeize his papers, and conduct him to the Baſtille; but he found means to eſcape into Holland, where he remained nearly two years. Having made his peace with the miniſtry, he prepared to come home, but before he returned, Monſ. Du F—— received intelligence that his father, irritated almoſt to madneſs by the information of his marriage, was making application for a lettre de cachet, in order to confine his daughter-in-law for the reſt of her life, and had alſo obtained power to have his ſon ſeized and impriſoned. Upon this Monſ. Du F—— and his wife fled with precipitation to Geneva, leaving their infant at nurſe near Caen. The Genevois ſeemed to think that the unfortunate ſituation of theſe ſtrangers, gave them a claim to all the offices of friendſhip. After an interval of many years, I have never heard Monſ. or Madame Du F—— recall the kindneſs they received from that amiable

ble people, without tears of tenderneſs and gratitude.

Meanwhile the Baron, having diſcovered the place of his ſon's retreat, obtained, in the name of the King, permiſſion from the cantons of Berne and Friburg to arreſt them at Lauſanne, where they had retired for ſome months. The wife of Le Seigneur Bailiff ſecretly gave the young people notice of this deſign, and on the thirtieth of January, 1775, they had juſt time to make their eſcape, with only a few livres in their pockets, and the cloaths in which they were dreſſed. Monſ. Du F——, upon his firſt going to Switzerland, had lent thirty louis to a friend in diſtreſs. He now, in this moment of neceſſity, deſired to be repaid, and was promiſed the money within a month: mean time, he and his wife wandered from town to town, without finding any place where they could remain in ſecurity. They had ſpent all their ſmall ſtock of money, and were almoſt without clothes: but at the expiration of the appointed time, the thirty louis were paid, and with this fund Monſ. and Madame Du F—— determined to take ſhelter in the only country which could afford them a ſafe aſylum from perſecution, and immediately ſet off for England, travelling through Germany, and part of Holland, to avoid paſſing through France.

They embarked at Rotterdam, and, after a long and gloomy paſſage, arrived late at night at London. A young man, who was their fellow paſſenger, had the charity to procure them a lodging in a garret, and directed them where to purchaſe a few ready-made clothes. When they

had remained in this lodging the time neceſſary for becoming pariſhioners, their bans were publiſhed in the church of St. Anne, Weſtminſter, where they were married by the Curate of the pariſh. They then went to the chapel of the French Ambaſſador, and were again married by his Chaplain; after which Monſ. Du F—— told me, * Les deux epoux vinrent faire maigre chaire à leur petite chambre."

Monſ. Du F—— endeavoured to obtain a ſituation at a ſchool, to teach the French language; but before ſuch a ſituation could be found, his wife was delivered of a girl. Not having ſufficient money to hire a nurſe, he attended her himſelf. At this period they endured all the horrors of abſolute want. Unknown and unpitied, without help or ſupport, in a foreign country, and in the depth of a ſevere winter, they almoſt periſhed with cold and hunger. The unhappy mother lay ſtretched upon the ſame bed with her new-born infant, who in vain implored her ſuccour, want of food having dried up that ſource of nouriſhment. The woman, at whoſe houſe they lodged, and whom they had for ſome weeks been unable to pay, after many threatenings, at length told them that they muſt depart the next morning. Madame Du F—— was at this time ſcarcely able to walk acroſs her chamber, and the ground was covered with ſnow. They had already exhauſted every reſource; they had ſold their watches, their clothes, to ſatisfy the cravings of hunger; every mode of relief was fled—

* The new married couple kept a faſt in their little apartment.

every

every avenue of hope was closed—and they determined to go with their infant to the suburbs of the town, and there seated on a stone, wait with patience for the deliverance of death. With what anguish did this unfortunate couple prepare to leave their last miserable retreat! With how many bitter tears did they bathe that wretched infant, whom they could no longer save from perishing!

Oh, my dear, my ever beloved friends! when I recollect that I am not at this moment indulging the melancholy cast of my own disposition, by painting imaginary distress; when I recollect not only that these were real sufferings, but that they were sustained by *you!* my mind is overwhelmed with its own sensations.—The paper is blotted by my tears—and I can hold my pen no longer.

LETTER XVII.

——— *"THE moral world,
Which though to us it seem perplex'd, moves on
In higher order; fitted, and impell'd,
By Wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
In universal good."

Monsr. and Madame du F—— were relieved from this extremity of distress at a moment so

* Thomson.

critical,

critical, and by means ſo unexpected, that it ſeems the hand of Heaven viſibly interpoſed in behalf of oppreſſed virtue. Early in the morning of that fatal day when they were to leave their laſt ſad ſhelter, Monſ. du F—— went out, and, in the utmoſt diſtraction of mind, wandered through ſome of the ſtreets in the neighbourhood. He was ſtopped by a gentleman whom he had known at Geneva, and who told him that he was then in ſearch of his lodging, having a letter to deliver to him from a Genevois clergyman. Monſ. du F—— opened the letter, in which he was informed by his friend, that, fearing he might be involved in difficulties, he had tranſmitted ten guineas to a banker in London, and intreated Monſ. du F—— would accept that ſmall relief, which was all he could afford, as a teſtimony of friendſhip. Monſ. du F—— flew to the banker's, received the money as the gift of Heaven, and then haſtening to his wife and child, bade them live a little longer.

A ſhort time after, he obtained a ſituation as French uſher at a ſchool; and Madame du F—, when ſhe had a little recovered her ſtrength, put out her infant to nurſe, and procured the place of French teacher at a boarding-ſchool.—They were now enabled to ſupport their child, and to repay the generous aſſiſtance of their kind friend at Geneva. At this period they heard of the death of their ſon, whom they left at Caen.

Monſ. and Madame du F—— paſſed two years in this ſituation, when they were again plunged into the deepeſt diſtreſs. A French jeweller was commiſſioned by the Baron du F—,

to

to go to his ſon and propoſe to him conditions of reconciliation. This man told Monſ. du F—— that his father was juſt recovered from a ſevere and dangerous illneſs, and that his daughter had lately died.—Theſe things, he ſaid, had led him to reflect with ſome pain on the ſeverity he had exerciſed towards his ſon; that the feelings of a parent were awakened in his boſom; and that if Monſ. du F—— would throw himſelf at his father's feet, and aſk forgiveneſs, he would not fail to obtain it, and would be allowed a penſion on which he might live with his wife in England. In confirmation of theſe aſſurances, this man produced ſeveral letters which he had received from the Baron to that effect; who, as a farther proof of his ſincerity, had given this agent ſeven hundred pounds to put into the hands of Monſ. du F—— for the ſupport of his wife and child during his abſence. The agent told him, that he had not been able to bring the money to England. but would immediately give him three drafts upon a merchant of reputation in London, with whom he had connections in buſineſs; the firſt draft payable in three months, the ſecond in ſix, and the third in nine.

Monſ. du F—— long deliberated upon theſe propoſals. He knew too well the vindictive ſpirit of his father, not to feel ſome dread of putting himſelf into his power. But his agent continued to give him the moſt ſolemn aſſurances of ſafety; and Monſ. du F—— thought it was not improbable that his ſiſter's death might have ſoftened the mind of his father. He reflected that his marriage had diſappointed thoſe ambitious

hopes

hopes of a great alliance, which his father had fondly indulged, and to whom he owed at leaſt, the reparation of haſtening to implore his forgiveneſs when he was willing to beſtow it. What alſo weighed ſtrongly on his mind was the conſideration that the ſum which his father had offered to depoſit for the uſe of his wife, would, in caſe any ſiniſter accident ſhould befal him, afford a ſmall proviſion for her and his infant.

The reſult of theſe deliberations was, that Monſ. du F—— determined (and who can much blame his want of prudence?) he determined to confide in a father!—to truſt in that inſtinctive affection, which, far from being connected with any peculiar ſenſibility of mind, it requires only to be a parent to feel—an affection, which, not confined to the human heart, ſoftens the ferociouſneſs of the tyger, and ſpeaks with a voice that is heard amidſt the howlings of the deſart. Monſ. du F——, after the repeated promiſes of his father, almoſt conſidered that ſuſpicion which ſtill hung upon his mind as a crime. But leaſt it might be poſſible that this agent was commiſſioned to deceive him, he endeavoured to melt him into compaſſion for his ſituation. He went to the village where his child was at nurſe, and, bringing her ſix miles in his arms, preſented her to this man, telling him, that the fate of that poor infant reſted upon his integrity. The man took the innocent creature in his arm, kiſſed her, and then, returning her to her father, renewed all his former aſſurances. Monſ. du F—— liſſened and believed. Alas! how difficult is it tor a good heart to ſuſpect human nature of crimes

crimes which make one bluſh for the ſpecies! How hard is it for a mind glowing with benevolence, to believe that the boſom of another harbours the malignity of a demon!

Monſ. du F—— now fixed the time for his departure with his father's agent, who was to accompany him to Normandy. Madame du F—— ſaw the preparations for his journey with anguiſh which ſhe could ill conceal. But ſhe felt that the delicacy of her ſituation forbad her interference. It was ſhe who made him an alien from his family, and an exile from his country. It was for her, that renouncing rank, fortune, friends, and connections, all that is eſteemed moſt valuable in life, he had ſuffered the laſt extremity of want, and now ſubmitted to a ſtate of drudgery and dependance. Would he not have a right to reproach her weakneſs, if ſhe attempted to oppoſe his reconciliation with his father, and exerted that influence which ſhe poſſeſſed over his mind, in order to detain him in a ſituation ſo remote from his former expectation? She was, therefore, ſenſible, that the duty, the gratitude ſhe owed her huſband, now required on her part the abſolute ſacrifice of her own feelings: ſhe ſuffered without complaint, and endeavoured to reſign herſelf to the will of Heaven.

The day before his departure, Monſ. du F— went to take leave of his little girl. At this moment a dark and melancholy preſage ſeemed to agitate his mind. He preſſed the child for a long while to his boſom, and bathed it with his tears. The nurſe eagerly enquired what was the matter, and aſſured him that the child was perfectly well. Monſ. du F—— had no

power to reply: he continued claſping his infant in his arms, and at length, tearing himſelf from her in ſilence, he ruſhed out of the houſe.

When the morning of his departure came, Madame du F——, addreſſing herſelf to his fellow-traveller, ſaid to him, with a voice of ſupplication, "I entruſt you, Sir, with my huſband, with the father of my poor infant, our ſole protector and ſupport!—have compaſſion on the widow and the orphan!" The man, caſting upon her a gloomy look, gave her a cold anſwer, which made her ſoul ſhrink within her. When Monſ. du F—— got into the Brighthelmſtone ſtage, he was unable to bid her farewell; but when the carriage drove off, he put his head out of the window, and continued looking after her, while ſhe fixed her eyes on him, and might have repeated with Imogen,

"I would have broke mine eye-ſtrings;
"Crack'd them, but to look upon him; till the diminution
"Of ſpace had pointed him as ſharp as my needle;
"Nay, followed him, till he had melted from
"The ſmallneſs of a gnat to air; and then—
"Then turn'd mine eye and wept!"

When the carriage was out of ſight, ſhe ſummoned all her ſtrength, and walked with trembling ſteps to the ſchool where ſhe lived as a teacher. With much difficulty ſhe reached the door; but her limbs could ſupport her no longer, and ſhe fell down ſenſeleſs at the threſhold—She was carried into the houſe, and reſtored to life and the ſenſations of miſery.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

MONS. du F—— arrived at his father's chateau in Normandy, in June 1778, and was received by Monſ. le Baron, and all his family, with the moſt affectionate cordiality. In much exultation of mind, he diſpatched a letter to Madame du F——, containing this agreeable intelligence; but his letter was far from producing in her mind the effect he deſired. A deep melancholy had ſeized her thoughts, and her foreboding heart refuſed to ſympathize in his joy. Short, indeed, was its duration. He had not been many days at the chateau, when he perceived, with ſurprize, and conſternation, that his ſteps were continually watched by two ſervants armed with fuſees.

His father now ſhewed him an arret, which, on the fourth of June, 1776, he had obtained from the Parliament of Rouen againſt his marriage. The Baron then ordered his ſon to accompany him to his houſe at Rouen, whither they went, attended by ſeveral ſervants. That evening, when the attendants withdrew after ſupper, the Baron, entirely throwing off the maſk of civility and kindneſs, which he had worn in ſuch oppoſition to his nature, reproached his ſon in terms of the utmoſt bitterneſs, for his paſt conduct, inveighed againſt his marriage, and, after having exhauſted every expreſſion of rage

rage and reſentment, at length ſuffered him to retire to his own apartment.

There the unhappy Monſ. du F——, abſorbed in the moſt gloomy reflections, lamented in vain that fatal credulity which had led him to put himſelf into the power of his implacable father. At the hour of midnight his meditations were interrupted by the ſound of feet approaching his chamber; and in a few moments the door was thrown open, and his father, attended by a ſervant armed, and two * Cavaliers de Marechauſſée, entered the room. Reſiſtance and ſupplication were alike unavailing. Monſ. du F——'s papers were ſeized; a few louis d'ors, which conſtituted all the money he poſſeſſed, were taken from him; and he was conducted in the dead of night, July the 7th, 1778, to St. Yon, a convent uſed as a place of confinement near Rouen, where he was thrown into a dungeon.

A week after his father entered the dungeon. You will perhaps conclude that his hard heart felt at length the relentings of a parent. You will at leaſt ſuppoſe, that his imagination being haunted, and his conſcience tormented with the image of a ſon ſtretched on the floor of this ſubterraneous cell, he could ſupport the idea no longer, and haſtened to give repoſe to his own mind by releaſing his captive. Far different were the motives of his viſit. He conſidered that ſuch was his ſon's attachment to his wife, that, ſo long as he believed he had left her in poſſeſſion of ſeven hundred pounds, he would

* Officers of juſtice.

find

find comfort from that conſideration, even in the depth of his dungeon. His father, therefore, haſtened to remove an error from the mind of his ſon, which left the meaſure of his woes unfilled. Nor did he chuſe to yield to another the office of inflicting a pang ſharper than captivity; but himſelf informed his ſon, that the merchant, who was to pay the ſeven hundred pounds to his wife, was declared a bankrupt.

A ſhort time after, the Baron du F—— commenced a ſuit at law againſt that agent of iniquity whom he had employed to deceive his ſon, and who, practiſing a refinement of treachery of which the Baron was not aware, had kept the ſeven hundred pounds, with which he was intruſted, and given drafts upon a merchant who he knew would fail before the time of payment. Not being able to proſecute this affair without a power of attorney from his ſon, the Baron applied to him for that purpoſe. But Monſ. du F——, being firmly reſolved not to deprive his wife of the chance of recovering the money for herſelf and her child, could by no intreaties or menaces be led to comply. In vain his father, who had conſented to allow him a few books, ordered him to be deprived of that reſource, and that his confinement ſhould be rendered ſtill more rigorous; he continued inflexible.

Monſ. du F—— remained in his priſon without meeting with the ſmalleſt mark of ſympathy from any one of his family, tho' his ſecond brother, Monſ. de B——, was now eighteen years of age; an age, at which the ſordid conſiderations of intereſt, how much ſoever they may affect our conduct at a more advanced period of life,

can

can ſeldom ſtifle thoſe warm and generous feelings which ſeem to belong to youth. It might have been expected that this young man would have abhorred the proſpect of poſſeſſing a fortune which was the juſt inheritance of his brother, and which could only be obtained by detaining that brother in perpetual captivity. Even admitting that his inexorable father prohibited his viſiting the priſon of his brother, his heart ſhould have told him, that diſobedience, in this inſtance, would have been virtue: Or, was it not ſufficient to remain a paſſive ſpectator of injuſtice, without becoming, as he afterwards did, the agent of cruelty inflicted on a brother?

Where are the words that can convey an adequate idea of the ſufferings of Madame du F—— during this period? Three weeks after her huſband's departure from England, ſhe heard the general report of the town of Rouen, that the Baron du F—— had obtained a letter de cachet againſt his ſon, and thrown him into priſon. This was all ſhe heard of her huſband for the ſpace of two years. Ignorant of the place of his confinement, uncertain if he ſtill lived, perhaps her miſeries were even more poignant than his. In the diſmal ſolitude of a priſon, his pains were alleviated by the ſoothing reflection that he ſuffered for her he loved; while that very idea was to her the moſt bitter aggravation of diſtreſs. Her days paſſed in anguiſh, which can only be conceived where it has been felt, and her nights were diſturbed by the gloomy wanderings of fancy. Sometimes ſhe ſaw him in her dreams chained to the floor of his dungeon, his boſom bathed in blood, and his countenance diſfigured by

by death. Sometimes ſhe ſaw him haſtening towards her, when at the moment that he was going to embrace her, they were fiercely torn aſunder. Madame du F—— was naturally of a delicate conſtitution, and grief of mind reduced her to ſuch a deplorable ſtate of weakneſs, that it was with infinite difficulty ſhe performed the duties of her ſituation. For herſelf, ſhe would have welcomed death with thankfulneſs; but ſhe conſidered that her child now depended entirely on her labours for ſupport: and this was a motive ſufficiently powerful to prompt her to the careful preſervation of her own life, though it had long become a burden. The child was three years old when her father left England; recollected him perfectly; and, whenever her mother went to viſit her, uſed to call with eagerneſs for her papa. The enquiry, in the voice of her child, of "When ſhall I ſee my dear, dear papa?" was heard by this unhappy mother with a degree of agony which it were vain indeed to deſcribe.

LETTER XIX.

MONS. du F—— was repeatedly offered his liberty, but upon conditions which he abhorred. He was required for ever to renounce his wife; who, while ſhe remained with her child in a diſtant country, was to receive from his father a

ſmall

ſmall penſion, as an equivalent for the pangs of diſappointed affection, of diſgrace and diſhonour. With the indignation of offended virtue he ſpurned at theſe inſulting propoſitions, and endeavoured to prepare his mind for the endurance of perpetual captivity.

Nor can imagination form an idea of a ſcene more dreadful than his priſon, where he perceived with horror that the greateſt number of thoſe priſoners who had been many years in confinement, had an appearance of frenzy in their looks, which ſhewed that reaſon had been too weak for the long ſtruggle with calamity, and had at laſt yielded to deſpair. In a cell adjoining Monſ. du F——'s, was an old man who had been confined nearly forty years. His grey beard hung down to his waiſt, and, during the day, he was chained by his neck to the wall. He was never allowed to leave his cell, and never ſpoke; but Monſ. du F—— uſed to hear the rattling of his chains.

The priſoners, a few excepted, were generally brought from their cells at the hour of noon, and dined together. But this gloomy repaſt was ſerved in uninterrupted ſilence. They were not ſuffered to utter one word, and the penalty of tranſgreſſing this rule was a rigorous confinement of ſeveral weeks. As ſoon as this comfortleſs meal was finiſhed, the priſoners were inſtantly obliged to return to their dungeons, in which they were locked up till the ſame hour the following day. Monſ. du F——, in his damp and melancholy cell, paſſed two winters without fire, and ſuffered ſo ſeverely from cold, that he was obliged to wrap himſelf up in the few clothes which

which covered his bed. Nor was he allowed any light, except that which during the ſhort day beamed through the ſmall grated window in the cieling of his dungeon.

Is it not difficult to believe that theſe ſufferings were inflicted by a father? A father!——that name which I cannot trace without emotion; which conveys all the ideas of protection, of ſecurity, of tenderneſs;—that dear relation to which, in general, children owe their proſperity, their enjoyments, and even their virtues!—Alas, the unhappy Monſ. du F—— owed nothing to *his* father, but that life, which from its earlieſt period his cruelty had embittered, and which he now condemned to languiſh in miſeries that death only could heal.

A young gentleman, who was confined in a cell on one ſide of Monſ. du F——'s, contrived to make a ſmall hole through the wall; and theſe companions in misfortune, by placing themſelves cloſe to the hole, could converſe together in whiſpers. But the monks were not long in diſcovering this, and effectually deprived them of ſo great an indulgence, by removing them to diſtant cells. Theſe unrelenting Monks, who performed with ſuch fidelity their office of tormenting their fellow creatures, who never relaxed in one article of perſecution, and adhered with ſcrupulous rigour to the code of cruelty, were called, * "Les Freres de la ſainte Charite." One among them deſerved the appellation. This good old Monk uſed to viſit the priſoners by ſtealth, and endeavour to adminiſter comfort to

* The Brothers of the holy Charity.

their

their affliction. Often he repeated to Monſ. du F———, * " Mon cher frere, conſolez vous; mettez votre confiance en Dieu, vos maux ſeront finis !"

Monſ. du F—— remained two years in priſon without receiving any intelligence of his wife, on whoſe account he ſuffered the moſt diſtracting anxiety. He had reaſon to apprehend that her frame, which had already been enfeebled by her misfortunes, would ſink beneath this additional load of miſery, and that ſhe would perhaps be rendered unable to procure that little pittance, which might preſerve herſelf and her child from want. At length one of his fellow-priſoners, who was going to regain his liberty, took charge of a letter to Madame du F——, and flattered him with the hope of finding ſome means of tranſmitting to him an anſwer.

The letter paints ſo naturally the ſituation of his mind, that I have tranſlated ſome extracts from it.

" My thoughts (he ſays) are unceaſingly oc-
" cupied about you, and my dear little girl. I
" am for ever recalling the bleſſed moments
" when I had the happineſs of being near you,
" and at that recollection my tears refuſe to be
" controuled. How could I conſent to ſeparate
" myſelf from what was moſt dear to me in the
" world ? No motive leſs powerful than that of
" ſeeking your welfare, and that of my child,
" could have determined me—and alas ! I have
" not accompliſhed this end. I know too well

* My dear brother be comforted ; place your confidence in God, your afflictions will have an end.

" that

" that you have never received that ſum of mo-
" ney which I thought I had ſecured for you,
" and for which I riſked the firſt bleſſing of
" life. What fills my mind with the greateſt
" horror, in the ſolitude of my priſon, is the
" fear that you are ſuffering difficulties in a fo-
" reign country. Here I remain ignorant of
" your fate, and can only offer to Heaven the
" moſt ardent vows for your welfare.

" What joy would a letter from you give
" me! but I dare not flatter myſelf with the
" hope of ſuch ſweet conſolation. All I can
" aſſure myſelf of is, that though ſeparated, per-
" haps for ever, our ſouls are united by the moſt
" tender friendſhip and attachment. Perhaps I
" may not find it poſſible to write to you again
" for a long while: but be aſſured that no me-
" naces, no ſufferings, no dungeons ſhall ever
" ſhake my fidelity to you, and that I ſhall love
" you to the laſt hour of my exiſtence. I find
" a conſolation in the reflection that it is for you
" I ſuffer. If Providence ever permits us to
" meet again, that moment will efface the re-
" membrance of all my calamities. Live, my
" deareſt wife, in that hope. I conjure you,
" preſerve your life for my ſake, and for the
" ſake of our dear little girl! Embrace her
" tenderly for me, and deſire her alſo to em-
" brace you for her poor papa. I need not re-
" commend my child to the care of ſo tender a
" mother; but I conjure you to inſpire her
" mind with the deepeſt ſenſe of religion. If
" ſhe is born to inherit the misfortunes of her
" father, this will be her beſt ſource of conſo-
" lation.

" Whatever

" Whatever offers may be made you by my " father, I exhort you never have the weakneſs " to liſten to them, but preſerve your rights, " and thoſe of my dear little girl, which, per- " haps, may one day be of ſome value. If you " are ſtill at Mrs. D——'s boarding ſchool, tell " her that I recommend my wife and child to " her compaſſion.——But what am I ſaying? " I am ignorant if you are ſtill with her, igno- " rant whether the deareſt objects of my affec- " tion ſtill live! But I truſt that Providence " has preſerved you. Adieu! May God Al- " mighty bleſs you, and my child! I never " ceaſe imploring him to have pity on the wi- " dow and the orphan in a land of ſtrangers."

LETTER XX.

YOU, my dear friend, who have felt the tender attachments of love and friendſhip, and the painful anxieties which abſence occaſions, even amidſt ſcenes of variety and pleaſure; who underſtand the value at which tidings from thoſe we love is computed in the arithmetic of the heart; who have heard with almoſt uncontroulable emotion the poſtman's rap at the door; have trembling ſeen the well-known hand which excited ſenſations that almoſt deprived you of power to break the ſeal which ſeemed the taliſ-

man

man of happineſs: you can judge of the feelings of Monſ. du F—— when he received by means of the ſame friend who had conveyed his letter, an anſwer from his wife. But the perſon who brought the letter to his dungeon, dreading the riſk of a diſcovery, inſiſted, that after having read it, he ſhould return it to him immediately. Monſ. du F—— preſſed the letter to his heart, bathed it with his tears, and implored the indulgence of keeping it at leaſt till the next morning. He was allowed to do ſo, and read it till every word was imprinted on his memory; and, after enjoying the ſad luxury of holding it that night on his boſom, was forced the next morning to relinquiſh his treaſure.

On the 10th of October, 1780, the Baron Du F—— came to the convent, and ordered the monks to bring his ſon from his dungeon to the parloir, and leave them together. With the utmoſt reluctance Monſ. du F—— obeyed this ſummons, having long loſt all hope of ſoftening the obdurate heart of his father. When the Monks withdrew, the Baron began upbraiding him in the moſt bitter terms, for his obſtinate reſiſtance to his will, which, he informed him, had availed nothing, as he had gained his ſuit at law, and recovered the ſeven hundred pounds. Monſ. du F—— replied, that the pain he felt from his intelligence would have been far more acute, had his wife been deprived, with his concurrence, of the money which was promiſed for her ſubſiſtence, and on the reliance of which promiſe he had been tempted to leave England. His father then enquired if he ſtill perſiſted in his adherence to the diſgraceful connection he had

had formed; to which his ſon anſwered, that not merely were his affections intereſted, but that his honour obliged him to maintain, with inviolable fidelity, a ſolemn and ſacred engagement. The rage of the Baron, at theſe words, became unbounded. He ſtamped the ground with his feet; he aimed a ſtroke at his ſon, who, taking advantage of this moment of frenzy, determined to attempt his eſcape; and, ruſhing out of the apartment, and avoiding that ſide of the convent which the monks inhabited, he endeavoured to find his way to the garden, but miſſed the paſſage which led to it. He then flew up a ſtair-caſe, from which he heard the voice of his father calling for aſſiſtance. Finding that all the doors which he paſſed were ſhut, he continued aſcending till he reached the top of the building, where meeting with no other opening than a hole made in the ſloping roof to let in light to a garret, he climbed up with much difficulty, and then putting his feet through the hole, and letting his body out by degrees, he ſupported himſelf for a moment on the roof, and deliberated on what he was about to do. But his mind was, at this criſis, wrought up to a pitch of deſperation, which mocked the ſuggeſtions of fear. He quitted his hold, and, flinging himſelf from a height of nearly fifty feet, became inſenſible before he reached the ground, where he lay weltering in his blood, and to all appearance dead.

He had fallen on the high road leading from Rouen to Caen. Some people who were paſſing gathered round him, and one perſon having waſhed the blood from his face, inſtantly recognized his features, and exclaimed to the aſtoniſhed

aſtoniſhed croud, that he was the eldeſt ſon of the Baron Du F———. Upon examining his body, it was found that he had broken his arm, his thigh, his ancle-bone, and his heel, beſides having received many violent bruiſes. He ſtill remained in a ſtate of inſenſibility; and, while theſe charitable ſtrangers were uſing their efforts to reſtore him to life, the monk haſtened from their convent, ſnatched their victim from thoſe good Samaritans who would have poured oil and wine into his wounds, and carried him to the infirmary of the convent, where he remained ſome weeks before he recovered his ſenſes; after which he lay ſtretched upon a bed for three months, ſuffering agonies of pain.

His father, who had been the jailor, and almoſt the murderer of his ſon, heard of theſe ſufferings without remorſe, nor did he ever ſee him more. But, though he was ſufficiently obdurate to bear unmoved the calamities he had inflicted on his child, though he could check the upbraidings of his own conſcience, he could not ſilence the voice of public indignation. The report that Monſ. du F—— had been found lying on the road bathed in blood, and had in that condition been dragged to the priſon of S. You, was ſoon ſpread through the town of Rouen. Every one ſympathized in the fate of this unfortunate young man, and execrated the tyranny of his unrelenting father.

The univerſal clamour reached the ear of his brother, Monſ. De B———, who now, for the firſt time, out of reſpect to the public opinion, took a meaſure which his heart had never dictated during the long captivity of his brother, that

that of viſiting him in priſon. Monſ. de B—'s deſign in theſe viſits was merely to appeaſe the public; for ſmall indeed was the conſolation they afforded to his brother. He did not come to bathe with tears the bed where that unhappy young man lay ſtretched in pain and anguiſh; to lament the ſeverity of his father; to offer him all the conſolation of fraternal tenderneſs:—he came to warn him againſt indulging a hope of ever regaining his liberty—he came to pierce his ſoul with "hard unkindneſs' altered eye, which mocks the tear it forc'd to flow!"

I will not attempt to deſcribe the wretchedneſs of Madame du F———, when ſhe heard the report of her huſband's ſituation. Your heart will conceive what ſhe ſuffered far better than I can relate it. Three months after his fall, Monſ. du F—— contrived, through the aſſiſtance of the charitable old monk, to ſend her a few lines written with his left hand. "My fall," (he ſays) "has made my captivity known, "and has led the whole town of Rouen to take "an intereſt in my misfortunes. Perhaps I "ſhall have reaſon to bleſs the accident, which "may poſſibly prove the means of procuring "me my liberty, and uniting me again to you! "—In the mean time, I truſt that Providence "will watch with paternal goodneſs over the "two objects of my moſt tender affection. "Do not, my deareſt wife, ſuffer the thoughts "of my ſituation to prey too much upon your "mind. My arm is almoſt well: my thigh and "foot are not quite cured; but I am getting "better.

"I could

"I could not ſuppreſs my tears on reading "that part of your letter wherein you tell me "that my dear little girl often aſks for her papa. "—Kiſs her for me a thouſand times, and tell "her that her papa is always thinking of her "and dear mama. I am well convinced that "you will give her the beſt education your lit-"tle pittance can afford. But above all, I "beſeech you, inſpire her young mind with "ſentiments of piety: teach her to love her "Creator: that is the moſt eſſential of all leſ-"ſons. Adieu, deareſt and moſt beloved of "woman!—Is there a period in reſerve when "we ſhall meet again? Oh how amply will "that moment compenſate for all our misfor-"tunes!"

LETTER XXI.

AT length the Parliament of Rouen began to intereſt itſelf in the cauſe of Monſ. du F——. The circumſtances of his confinement were mentioned in that Aſſembly, and the Preſident ſent his Secretary to Monſ. du F——'s priſon, who had now quitted his bed, and was able to walk with the aſſiſtance of crutches. By the advice of the Preſident, Monſ. du F——— addreſſed ſome letters to the Parliament, repreſenting his ſituation in the moſt pathetic

terms, and imploring their interference in his behalf.

It is here neceſſary to mention, that Monſ. de Bel B———, Procureur General de Rouen, being intimately connected with the Baron du F——'s family, had ventured to demonſtrate his friendſhip for the Baron, by confining his ſon nearly three years on his own authority and without any lettre de cachet. And, though Monſ. de Bel B—— well knew, that every ſpecies of oppreſſion was connived at, under the ſhelter of lettres de cachet, he was ſenſible that it was only beneath their auſpices that the exerciſe of tyranny was permitted: and in this particular inſtance, not having been cruel * ſelon les regles, he apprehended, that if ever Monſ. du F——— regained his liberty, he might be made reſponſible for his conduct. He therefore, exerted all his influence, and with too much ſucceſs, to fruſtrate the benevolent intention of the Preſident of the Parliament, reſpecting Monſ. du F———. His letters were indeed read in that Aſſembly, and ordered to be regiſtered, where they ſtill remain a record of the puſillanimity of thoſe men, who ſuffered the authority of Monſ. de Bel B——— to overcome the voice of humanity; who acknowledge the atrocity of the Baron du F——'s conduct, and yet were deaf to the ſupplications of his ſon, while, from the depth of his dungeon, he called upon them for protection and redreſs.

May the fate of the captive, in the land of France, no more hang ſuſpended on the frail

* According to rules.

thread

thread of the pity, or the caprice of individuals! May juſtice erect, on eternal foundations, her protecting ſanctuary for the oppreſſed; and may humanity and mercy be the graceful decorations of her temple!

The Baron du F——— perceived that, notwithſtanding his machinations had prevented the Parliament of Rouen from taking any effectual meaſures towards liberating his ſon, it would be impoſſible to ſilence the murmurs of the public, while he remained confined at St. Yon. He determined, therefore, to remove him to ſome diſtant priſon, where his name and family were unknown; and where, beyond the juriſdiction of the Parliament of Rouen, his groans might riſe unpitied and unavenged. But the Baron, not daring, amidſt the general clamour, to remove his ſon by force, endeavoured to draw him artfully into the ſnare he had prepared.

M. de B—— was ſent to his brother's priſon, where he repreſented to him, that, though he muſt not indulge the leaſt hope of ever regaining his liberty, yet, if he would write a letter to Monſ. M———, keeper of the ſeals, deſiring to be removed to ſome other place, his confinement ſhould be made far leſs rigorous. Monſ. du F—— was now in a ſtate of deſperation, that rendered him almoſt careleſs of his fate. He perceived that the Parliament had renounced his cauſe. He ſaw no poſſibility to eſcape from St. Yon; and flattered himſelf, that in a place where he was leſs cloſely confined it might perhaps be practicable; and therefore he conſented to write the letter required, which Monſ. de B—— conveyed in triumph to his father. There were, however,

however, ſome expreſſions in the letter which the Baron diſapproved, on which account he returned it, deſiring that thoſe expreſſions might be changed. But, during the interval of his brother's abſence, Monſ. du F——— had reflected on the raſh imprudence of confiding in the promiſes of thoſe by whom he had been ſo cruelly deceived. No ſooner, therefore, did Monſ. de B——— put the letter again into his hands, than he tore it into pieces, and peremptorily refuſed to write another.

Soon after this, Monſ. du B——, the ambaſſador of the tyrant, again returned to his brother with freſh credentials, and declared to him, that if he would write to the keeper of the ſeals, deſiring to be removed from St. Yon, he ſhould, in one fortnight after his removal, be reſtored to liberty. Upon Monſ. du F——'s aſſerting that he could no longer confide in the promiſes made him by his family, his brother, in a formal written engagement, to which he ſigned his name, gave him the moſt ſolemn aſſurance, that this promiſe ſhould be fulfilled with fidelity, Monſ. du F—— deſired a few days for deliberation, and, during that interval, found means of conſulting a magiſtrate of Rouen who was his friend, and who adviſed him to comply with the terms that were offered, after having cauſed ſeveral copies of the written engagement to be taken, and certified by ſuch of the priſoners at St. Yon as were likely to regain their freedom; a precaution neceſſary, leſt his own copy ſhould be torn from his hands.

Thus, having neither truſted to the affection, the mercy, or the remorſe of thoſe within whoſe

boſoms ſuch ſentiments were extinguiſhed; having bargained, by a written agreement, with a father and a brother, for his releaſe from the horrors of perpetual captivity, Monſ. du F—— wrote the letter required.

Soon after, an order was ſent from Verſailles for his releaſe from the priſon of St. Yon, and with it a lettre de cachet, whereby he was exiled to Beauvais, with a command not to leave that town. Monſ. de B——, acting as a * Cavalier de la Marechauſſee, conducted his brother to this place of exile, and there left him. A ſhort time after, Monſ. du F—— received an intimation, from that magiſtrate of Rouen who had intereſted himſelf in his misfortunes, that his father was on the point of obtaining another lettre de cachet, to remove him from Beauvais, to ſome priſon in the ſouth of France, where he might never more be heard of. This gentleman added, that Monſ. du F—— had not one moment to loſe, and adviſed him immediately to attempt his eſcape.

Early on the morning after he received this intelligence, Monſ. du F——, who had the liberty to walk about the town, fled from Beauvais. The perſon who brought him the letter from the magiſtrate, waited for him at a little diſtance from the town, and accompanied him on his journey. When they reached Liſle in Flanders, not having a paſſport, they were obliged to wait from eleven o'clock at night till ten the next morning, before they could obtain permiſſion from the Governor to proceed on

* An officer of juſtice.

their journey. Monſ. du F—— concluded that he was purſued, and ſuffered the moſt dreadful apprehenſions of being overtaken. His companion, with ſome addreſs, at length obtained a paſſport, and attended him as far as Oſtend. The wind proving contrary, he was detained two days in a ſtate of the moſt diſtracting inquietude, and concealed himſelf on board the veſſel in which he had taken his paſſage for England. At length the wind became favourable; the veſſel ſailed, and arrived late in the night at Margate. Monſ. du F——, when he reached the Engliſh ſhore, knelt down, and, in a tranſport of joy, kiſſed the earth of that dear country which had twice proved his aſylum.

He then enquired when the ſtage-coach ſet off for London, and was told that it went at ſo early an hour the next morning that he could not go till the day after, as he muſt wait till his portmanteau was examined by the cuſtom-houſe officers, who were now in bed. The delay of a few hours in ſeeing his wife and child, after ſuch an abſence, after ſuch ſufferings, was not to be endured. In a violent agitation of mind, he ſnatched up his portmanteau, and was going to fling it into the ſea, when he was prevented by the people near him, who ſaid, that if he would pay the fees, his portmanteau ſhould be ſent after him. He eagerly complied with their demands, and ſet out for London. As he drew near, his anxiety, his impatience, his emotion increaſed. His preſent ſituation appeared to him like one of thoſe delicious dreams, which ſometimes viſited the darkneſs of his dungeon, and for a while reſtored him, in imagination, to

thoſe

thoſe he loved. Scarcely could he perſuade himſelf that he was beyond the reach of oppreſſion; that he was in a land of freedom; that he was haſtening every moment towards his wife and child. When he entered London, his ſenſations became almoſt too ſtrong to bear. He was in the very ſame place which his wife and child inhabited—but were they yet alive? were they in health? had Heaven indeed reſerved for him the tranſport of holding them once more to his boſom, of mixing his tears with theirs? When he knocked at the door of the houſe where he expected to hear of Madame du F——, he had ſcarcely power to articulate his enquiries after her and his child. He was told that they were in health, but that Madame du F——, being in a ſituation ſix miles from London, he could not ſee her till the next morning. Monſ. du F—— had not been in a bed for ſeveral nights, and was almoſt overcome with agitation and fatigue. He, however, inſtantly ſet out on foot for the habitation of his wife, announced himſelf to the miſtreſs of the family, and remained in another apartment, while ſhe, after making Madame du F—— promiſe that ſhe would liſten to her with calmneſs, told her, that there was a probability of her huſband's return to England. He heard the ſobs, the exclamations, of his wife at this intelligence—he could refrain no longer—he ruſhed into the room—he flew into her arms—he continued preſſing her in ſilence to his boſom. She was unable to ſhed a tear; and it was not till after he had long endeavoured to ſooth her by his tenderneſs, and had talked to her of her child, that ſhe obtained relief from weeping.

She then, with the moſt violent emotion, again and again repeated the ſame enquiries, and was a conſiderable time before ſhe recovered any degree of compoſure.

All the fortune Monſ. du F—— poſſeſſed when he reached London, was one half guinea; but his wife had, during his abſence, ſaved ten guineas out of her little ſalary. You will eaſily imagine how valuable this hoard became in her eſtimation, when ſhe could apply it to the precious uſe of relieving the neceſſities of her huſband. Monſ. du F—— went to London the next day, and hired a little garret: there, with a few books, a ruſh-light, and ſome ſtraw in which he wrapped his legs to ſupply the want of fire, he recollected not the ſplendour to which he had once been accuſtomed, but the dungeon from which he had eſcaped. He ſaw his wife and child once a week; and, in thoſe ſolitary moments, when books failed to ſooth his thoughts, he anticipated the hour in which he ſhould again meet the objects moſt dear to his heart, and paſſed the intervals of time in philoſophic reſignation. His clothes being too ſhabby to admit of his appearing in the day, he iſſued from his little ſhed when it was dark, and endeavoured to warm himſelf by the exerciſe of walking.

Unfortunately he caught the ſmall-pox, and his diſorder roſe to ſuch a height, that his life was deſpaired of. In his delirium, he uſed to recapitulate the ſad ſtory of his misfortunes; and when he ſaw any perſon near his bed-ſide, would call out with the utmoſt vehemence, * "Qu'on faſſe ſortir tous les Francois!" Af-

* Make all the French go out.

ter

ter having been for ſome days in the moſt imminent danger, Monſ. du F—— recovered from his diſeaſe.

LETTER XXII.

SIX months after Monſ. du F——'s return to England, his family found themſelves compelled to ſilence the public clamours, by allowing him a ſmall annual penſion. Upon this, Madame du F—— quitted her place, and came to live with her huſband and her child in an obſcure lodging. Their little income received ſome addition by means of teaching the French language in a few private families.

A young lady, who came to pay me a viſit at London in 1785, deſired to take ſome leſſons in French, and Madame du F—— was recommended to us for that purpoſe. We ſoon perceived in her converſation every mark of a cultivated mind, and of an amiable diſpoſition. She at length told us the hiſtory of her misfortunes, with the pathetic eloquence of her own charming language; and, after having heard that recital, it required but common humanity, to treat her with the reſpect due to the unhappy, and to feel for her ſorrows that ſympathy to which they had ſuch claim. How much has the ſenſibility of

Monſ. and Madame du F—— over-rated thoſe proofs of eſteem and friendſhip which we were enabled to ſhew them in their adverſity!—But I muſt not anticipate.

On the ſeventh of October, 1787, the Baron died, leaving, beſides Monſ. du F——, two other ſons, and a daughter.

I muſt here mention, that at the time when Monſ. du F—— was confined to his bed in the priſon of St. Yon, from the conſequences of his fall, his father, in order to avoid the clamours at Rouen, went for ſome weeks to Paris. He there made a will, diſinheriting his eldeſt ſon. By the old laws of France, however, a father could not puniſh his ſon more than once for the ſame offence. Nor was there any thing in ſo mild a clauſe that could much encourage diſobedience; ſince this ſingle puniſhment, of which the mercy of the law was careful to avoid repetition, might be extended to reſidence for life in a dungeon. Such was evidently the intention of the Baron du F——: and, though his ſon, diſappointing this intention, had eſcaped with only three years of captivity, and ſome broken limbs, the benignant law above-mentioned interpoſed to prevent farther puniſhment, and left the Baron without any legal right to deprive Monſ. du F—— of his inheritance. His brothers, being ſenſible of this, wrote to inform him of his father's death, and recal him to France. He refuſed to go while the lettre de cachet remained in force againſt him. The Baron having left all his papers ſealed up, which his younger ſons could not open but in the preſence of their brother, they obtained the revocation of the lettre de

de cachet, and ſent it to Monſ. du F——, who immediately ſet off for France.

The Baron's eſtate amounted to about four thouſand pounds a year. Willing to avoid a tedious litigation with his brothers, Monſ. du F—— conſented to divide with them this property. But he ſoon found reaſon to repent of his imprudent generoſity; thoſe very brothers, on whom he had beſtowed an equal ſhare of his fortune, refuſing to concur with him in his application to the parliament of Rouen for the revocation of the arret againſt his marriage. Monſ. du F——, ſurpriſed and ſhocked at their refuſal, began to entertain ſome apprehenſions of his perſonal ſafety; and dreading that, ſupported by the authority of his mother, another lettre de cachet might be obtained againſt him, he haſtened back to England. Nor was it till after he had received aſſurances from ſeveral of the magiſtrates of Rouen, that they would be reſponſible for the ſafety of his perſon, that he again ventured to return to France, accompanied by Madame and Mademoiſelle du F——, in order to obtain the revocation of the arret. On their arrival at Rouen, finding that the parliament was exiled, and that the buſineſs could not be proſecuted at that time, they again came back to paſs the winter in England.

At this period his mother died; and in the following ſummer Monſ. and Madame du F—— arrived in France, at the great epocha of French liberty, on the 15th of July, 1789, the very day after that on which the Baſtille was taken. It was then that Monſ. du F—— felt himſelf in ſecurity on his native ſhore.—It was then that

his

his domeſtic comforts were no longer embittered with the dread of being torn from his family by a ſeparation more terrible than death itſelf.—It was then that he no more feared that his repoſe at night would be broken by the entrance of ruffians prepared to drag him to dungeons, the darkneſs of which was never viſited by the bleſſed beams of day!

He immediately took poſſeſſion of his chateau, and only waits for the appointment of the new judges, to ſolicit the revocation of the arret againſt his marriage, and to ſecure the inheritance of his eſtate to Mademoiſelle du F——, his only daughter, who is now fifteen years of age, and is that very child who was born in the boſom of adverſity, and whoſe infancy was expoſed to all the miſeries of want. May ſhe never know the afflictions of her parents, but may ſhe inherit their virtues!

Under the antient government of France, there might be ſome doubts of Monſ. du F——'s obtaining the revocation of the arret againſt his marriage. Beneath the iron hand of deſpotiſm, juſtice and virtue might have been overthrown. But happier omens belong to the new conſtitution of France. The judges will commence their high office with that dignity becoming ſo important a truſt, by cancelling an act of the moſt flagrant oppreſſion. They will confirm that ſolemn, that ſacred engagement which Monſ. and Madame du F—— have three times vowed at the altar of God!—which has been ſanctioned by laws human and divine—which has been ratified in earth and in heaven.

No ſooner had Monſ. and Madame du F——

taken

taken poſſeſſion of their property, than they ſeemed eager to convince us, how little this change of fortune was capable of obliterating, for one moment, the remembrance of the friends of their adverſity. With all the earneſtneſs of affection they invited us to France, and appeared to think their proſperity incomplete, and their happineſs imperfect, till we accepted the invitation. You will believe that we are not inſenſible witneſſes of the delightful change in their fortune. We have the joy of ſeeing them, not only poſſeſſing all the comforts of affluence, but univerſal reſpect and eſteem.

Monſ. du F—— endeavours to baniſh miſery from his poſſeſſions. His tenants conſider him as a father, and, "when the eye ſees him it bleſſes him." I ſaid to one of the peaſants whom I met in my walk yeſterday, * "Je ſuis charmée de voir que Monſ. eſt ſi bien aimé ici." —"Oh pour ça, oui Madame, et à bonne raiſon, car il ne nous fait que du bien!"

Such is the hiſtory of Monſ. du F——. Has it not the air of a romance? and are you not glad that the denouement is happy?—Does not the old Baron die exactly in the right place; at the very page one would chuſe?—Or, if I ſometimes wiſh that he had lived a little longer, it is only from that deſire of retribution, which, in caſes of injuſtice and oppreſſion, it is ſo natural to feel.—It is only becauſe the knowledge of the overthrow of the antient government would have

* I am happy to ſee that Monſieur is ſo much beloved.—Oh, yes, Madam, and well he may, he does us nothing but good.

been

been a ſufficient puniſhment to him for all his cruelty. He would have ſickened at the ſight of general happineſs. The idea of liberty being extended to the lower ranks, while, at the ſame time, tyranny was deprived of its privileges, he would have found inſupportable; and would have abhorred a country, which could no longer boaſt of a Baſtille; a country where iron cages were broken down, where dungeons were thrown open; and where juſtice was henceforth to ſhed a clear and ſteady light, without one dark ſhade of relief from lettres de cachet.

But peace be to his aſhes! If the recollection of his evil deeds excites my indignation, it is far otherwiſe with Monſ. and Madame du F——. Never did I hear their lips utter an expreſſion of reſentment, or diſreſpect, towards his memory; and never did I, with that warmth which belongs to my friendſhip for them, involuntarily paſs a cenſure on his conduct, without being made ſenſible, by their behaviour, that I had done wrong.

Adieu!

LETTER XXIII.

I AM glad you think that a friend's having been perſecuted, impriſoned, maimed, and almoſt

moſt murdered under the antient government of France, is a good excuſe for loving the revolution. What, indeed, but friendſhip, could have led my attention from the annals of imagination to the records of politics; from the poetry to the proſe of human life? In vain might Ariſtocrates have explained to me the rights of kings, and Democrates have deſcanted on the rights of the people. How many fine-ſpun threads of reaſoning would my wandering thoughts have broken; and how difficult ſhould I have found it to arrange arguments and inferences in the cells of my brain! But however dull the faculties of my head, I can aſſure you, that when a propoſition is addreſſed to my heart, I have ſome quickneſs of perception. I can then decide, in one moment, points upon which philoſophers and legiſlators have differed in all ages: nor could I be more convinced of the truth of any demonſtration in Euclid, than I am, that, that ſyſtem of politics muſt be the beſt, by which thoſe I love are made happy.

Monſ. du F——'s chateau is near the little town of Forges, celebrated for its mineral waters, and much reſorted to in ſummer on that account. We went to the fountain on pretence of drinking the waters, but in reality to ſee the company. The firſt morning we made our appearance, the ladies preſented us with noſegays of fine ſpreading purple heath, which they called *Bouquets à la fontaine.

I was told, before I left England, that I ſhould find that French liberty had deſtroyed

* Noſegays of the fountain.

French

French urbanity. But every thing I have ſeen and heard, ſince my arrival in France, has contradicted this aſſertion, and led me to believe that the French will carefully preſerve, from the wreck of their monarchical government, the old charter they have ſo long held of ſuperiority in politeneſs. I am perſuaded the moſt determined Democrates of the nation, whatever other privileges they may chuſe to exerciſe, will always ſuffer the privilege of being rude to lie dormant.

In every country it is ſocial pleaſure that ſheds the moſt delicious flowers which grow on the path of life; but in France ſhe covers the whole way with roſes, and the traveller can ſcarcely mark its ruggedneſs. Happy are a people, ſo fond of talking as the French, in poſſeſſing a language modelled to all the charming purpoſes of converſation. Their turn of expreſſion is a dreſs that hangs ſo gracefully on gay ideas, that you are apt to ſuppoſe that wit, a quality parſimoniouſly diſtributed in other countries, is in France as common as the gift of ſpeech. Perhaps that brilliant phraſeology, which dazzles a foreigner, may be familiar and common to a French ear: but how much ingenuity muſt we allow to a people, who have formed a language, of which the common-place phraſes give you the idea of wit!

You, who are a reader of Madame Brulart's works, will know, that I am here on a ſort of claſſic ground. The Abbaye de Bobec is but a few miles diſtant from this chateau, and I walk every day in the foreſt where Michel and Jaqueline erected their little hut; which you may remember, having unfortunately built too low to admit

of

of their ſtanding upright, they comforted themſelves with the reflection, * "Qu'on ne peut pas penſer à tout:" and, when they were once ſeated in their dwelling, in which it was a vain attempt to ſtand, expatiated on the comforts of being † "chez ſoi." Upon enquiry, I have heard that poor Jaqueline, three years after the happy change in her fortune, was killed by a ſtroke of lightning, and that Michel (as he was bound to do, being the hero of a romance) died of grief.

The Abbé de Bobec has much reputation in this part of the country for wiſdom; but a French gentleman, who dined with him yeſterday, told me this morning, ‡ "Il m'a donné une indigeſtion de bon ſens." This is ſomething in the ſtyle of a young Frenchman, who went to viſit an acquaintance of his at Rotterdam, and has ever ſince called that worthy gentleman, § "La raiſon continue (comme on dit la fievre continue) avec des redoublemens."

An alarm has been ſpread but without any foundation, that the Auſtrian troops were marching to invade France. It puts me in mind of the old trick of the Roman patricians, who, whenever the plebeians grew refractory, called out, that the Equi and the Volſci were coming: the Equi and the Volſci, however, never came.

* One cannot think of every thing.
† At home.
‡ He gave me an indigeſtion of good ſenſe.
§ Reaſoning continued, as you would ſpeak of a fever with freſh paroxyſms.

LETTER

LETTER XXIV.

WE have had a fête at the chateau, on the day of St. Auguſtin, who is Monſ. du F——'s patron; and, though Monſ. is become a proteſtant, I hope he will always ſhow this mark of reſpect to his old friend St. Auguſtin. Indeed I am perſuaded that Luther and Calvin, if they had been of our party, would have reconciled their minds to theſe charming rites of ſuperſtition.

The ceremonies began with a diſcharge of fuſées, after which Mademoiſelle du F—— entered the ſaloon, where a great croud were aſſembled, with a crown of flowers in her hand, and addreſſed her father in theſe words:—* "Mon "tres cher papa, pourrois-je profiter d'un mo- "ment plus favorable pour vous ſouhaiter une "bonne fête, que celui ou nos bons, et *vrais*

* "My deareſt papa, can I chuſe a more favourable mo- "ment to wiſh you an agreeable fête than this, when our beſt, "our faithful friends are here aſſembled, and join with me "in celebrating this happy day? It is in the midſt of your "poſſeſſions, my dear papa, it is in your chateau, that Di- "vine Providence has re-united us, to declare your virtues, "and the heroic fortitude with which you have ſupported "your misfortunes. The ſtorm is paſt, and you can now, my "dear papa enjoy the happineſs you ſo well deſerve, and the "eſteem of every amiable mind. May your child contribute "to your felicity! May the Supreme Being hear the prayers "which I addreſs to him for the preſervation of a tender fa- "ther, to whom I offer my duty, my gratitude, and the beſt "affections of my heart!"

"*amis*

" *amis* ſont ici raſſemblés, et s'uniſſent a moi " pour celebrer cet heureux jour ? C'eſt " dans vos biens cher papa, c'eſt dans vo- " tre chateau que la Divine Providence nous " réunit, pour chanter vos vertus, et ce cou- " rage héroique qui vous a fait ſupporter tous " vos *Malheurs*. L'orage eſt paſſé, jouiſſez " maintenant cher papa du bonheur que vous " meritez ſi bien-de l'eſtime que vous vous étes " acquis dans tous les cœurs ſenſibles. Que " voutre chere enfant contribue a votre felicité, " que l'Eternel daigne exaucer les vœux que je " lui adreſſe pour la conſervation et le bonheur " d'un tendre pere, a qui j'offre mes homages, " ma reconnoiſſance, et les ſentimens d'un cœur " qui vous eſt tout devoué."

She then placed the crown of flowers upon his head, and he embraced her tenderly. A number of ladies advanced, preſented him with a noſegays, and were embraced in their turn.

We had ſeen, while we were at Paris, a charming little piece performed at the Theatre de Monſieur, called, " La Federation, ou La Famille Patriotique." Madame du F—— ſent for a copy of this piece, and it was now performed by the company aſſembled at the chateau. The tenants, with their wives and daughters, formed the moſt conſiderable part of the audience, and I believe no play, in antient or modern times, was ever acted with more applauſe. My ſiſter took a part in the performance, which I declined doing, till I recollected that one of the principal characters was a ſtatue; upon which, I conſented to perform * le beau role de

* The fine part of the ſtatue.

la

la ſtatue. And, in the laſt ſcene, I, being the repreſentative of liberty, appeared with all her uſual attributes, and guarding the conſecrated banners of the nation, which were placed on an altar, on which was inſcribed, in tranſparent letters, * "A la Liberté, 14 Juillet, 1789." One of the performers pointing to the ſtatue, ſays, † "Chaque peuple à décoré cette idole de quelques attributs qui lui ſont particuliers.—Ce bonnet ſur-tout eſt devenu un embléme éloquent. —Ne pourrions-nous pas en ajouter d'autres qui deviendront peut-étres auſſi célebres!" He then unfolds a ſcarf of national ribband, which had been placed at the foot of the altar, and adds, ‡ "Cette noble echarpe!—Ces couleurs ſi bien aſſorties ne ſont-elles pas dignes de figurer auſſi parmi les attributs de la Liberté?" The ſcarf was thrown over my ſhoulder, and the piece concluded with § Le Carillon National: after a grand chorus of ‖ *ça ira*, the performers ranged themſelves in order, and *ça ira* was danced. *Ca ira* hung on every lip, *ça ira* glowed on every countenance! Thus do the French, leſt they ſhould be tempted, by pleaſure, to forget one moment the cauſe of liberty, bind it to their remembrance in the hour of feſtivity, with fillets and ſcarfs of national ribband; connect it with

* To Liberty, July 14th, 1789.

† Every nation has decorated this idol with ſome peculiar attributes.—This cap has been long one of her moſt eloquent emblems.—Can we not add ſome others, which may, perhaps, become no leſs celebrated?

‡ That noble ſcarf!—are not its auſpicious colours worthy of appearing amongſt the attributes of Liberty?

§ The national bells.

‖ It will go on.

the

the ſound of the viol and the harp, and appoint it not merely to regulate the great movements of government, but to mold the figure of the dance. When the cotillon was finiſhed, ſome beautiful fire-works were played off, and we then went to ſupper. * "Vous étes bien placée Monſ." ſaid Madame du F—— to a young Frenchman, who was ſeated between my ſiſter and me at table. † "Madame," anſwered he, in a ſtile truly French, "me voila heureux pour la premiere fois, a vingt trois ans.

After ſupper we returned to the ſaloon, where the gentlemen danced with the peaſant girls, and the ladies with the peaſants. A more joyous ſcene, or a ſet of happier countenances, my eyes never beheld. When I recollected the former ſituation of my friends, the ſpectacle before me ſeemed an enchanting viſion: I could not forbear, the whole evening, comparing the paſt with the preſent, and, while I meant to be exceedingly merry, I felt that tears, which would not be ſuppreſſed, were guſhing from my eyes —but they were tears of luxury.

* You are well placed, Sir.

† I am made happy, Madam, for the firſt time, at three and twenty years of age.

LETTER

LETTER XXV.

A Decree has paſſed in the National Aſſembly, inſtituting rewards for literary merit. The propoſal met with great oppoſition from one of the members, I do not wiſh to remember his name, who ſaid the ſtate ſtood in need of huſbandmen, not poets; as if the ſtate would be encumbered by having both. This gentleman thinks, that, provided wheat and oats flouriſh, the culture of *mind* may be diſpenſed with; and that, if the ſpade and harrow are ſharpened, the quill of genius may be ſtripped of all its feathers. * Mais, vive l'Aſſemblée Nationale!—they have determined never to aboliſh the *nobility* of the muſes, or deprive the fine arts † *de leurs droits honorifiques.*

Apropos of poets.—The French have conquered many old prejudices, but their prejudice againſt Shakeſpeare ſtill exiſts. They well know, that though in England, it is our policy, or our pleaſure, to have an oppoſition on every other ſubject, we have not one diſſenting voice about Shakeſpeare; and therefore they allow that he may, perhaps, deſerve to be the idol of the Britiſh nation, a ſort of houſehold god whom we delight to honour; but they have gods of their own to whom they pay homage, and have little

* Long live the National Aſſembly.
† Of their honorary rights.

idea

idea that Shakeſpeare was not only the glory of England, but of human nature. It would be a hopeleſs attempt to convince them, that the genius of their boaſted Corneille has ſomething of the proud and affected greatneſs of Lewis the Fourteenth, while that of Shakeſpeare has more affinity to the noble dignified ſimplicity of Henry the Fourth. They repeat, till you are weary of the remark, that French tragedies are regular dramas, while Shakeſpeare's plays are monſtrous. This reminds me of Boileau's anſwer to an author who had brought him a play to read, of which Boileau diſapproved. Sir, exclaimed the enraged author, I defy malice to ſay that my piece tranſgreſſes any one of the rules. "Why Sir," replied Boileau, "it tranſgreſſes the firſt rule of all, that of keeping the reader awake."

The young gentleman who, as I mentioned to you, was confined at St. Yon, in the cell adjoining Monſ. du F——'s, and with whom he uſed to converſe in whiſpers through a hole in the wall, is come to pay a viſit at the chateau. This young man went very early into the army: but, at the age of twenty, his father being at St. Domingo, and his mother conſidering her ſon as a ſpy upon her conduct, which was ſuch as ſhrunk from inſpection, obtained a letter de cachet againſt him, and he was confined three years at St. Yon. He has told me, that, after the firſt year, he loſt all hope of ever regaining his liberty. A morbid melancholy ſeized his mind; he lay ſtretched on the ſame bed for two years; and ſometimes refuſed to taſte food for ſeveral days together. When his father, at his

return

return from St. Domingo, came to liberate him, he was ſo feeble that he was unable to walk.

His father again left France, and the brother of this young man has ſuffered a fate even more ſevere than himſelf. At the age of fifteen, he was guilty of ſome indiſcretions, which incurred the reſentment of his unrelenting mother, and another letter de cachet was obtained.—" Is there any cauſe in nature that makes theſe hard hearts?"—He was confined ten years, and only releaſed when all priſons were thrown open, by order of the National Aſſembly. But for this unhappy young man their mercy came too late—His reaſon was gone for ever! and he was led out of his priſon, at the age of five and twenty, a maniac. When the ſenſibility with which his brother relates theſe family misfortunes melts us into tears, we are told, * que la triſteſſe, eſt la maladie du charbon Anglois, and will never be tolerated in France.

You will not be ſurprized to hear that Monſ. du F—— has, with great complacency, relinquiſhed his title; and that, being a ci-devant *captive*, as well as a ci-devant *Baron*, he feels that the enjoyment of perſonal ſecurity, the ſweetneſs of domeſtic comfort, in ſhort, that the common rights of man are of more value than he ever found the rights of nobility in the ſolitude of his dungeon. He is ready to acknowledge, that confinement in a ſubterraneous cell, a fall from a height of fifty feet, and the fracture of his limbs, are things which even the title of Baron can ſcarcely counterbalance; and he there-

* Melancholy is the diſeaſe of Engliſh coal fires.

fore

fore drinks a libation, every day after dinner, *" à la ſanté de l'Aſſemblée Nationale, though they have deprived him of the ſoothing epithet of Mon-Seigneur. We, however, ſhall ſoon ceaſe to pledge him in this toaſt. The day of our departure draws near. We muſt leave the charming ſociety at the chateau—we muſt leave the peaſants dance under the ſhade of the old elms, while the ſetting ſun pours ſtreams of liquid gold through the foliage—we muſt leave † Le maitre de violon, qui ſe ride en riant, avec ſa malheureuſe figure.—All this muſt we leave! —To-morrow is the laſt day of our reſidence at the chateau. What a deſolate word is that monoſyllable of *laſt*—how ſad, how emphatical its meaning!—There is ſomething in it which gives the moſt indifferent things an intereſt in our affections.—I am ſure I could write a volume with this little word for my text; but I may as well explain myſelf in one line—I am ſorry to leave France!

LETTER XXVI.

London.

WE left France early in September, that we might avoid the equinoctial gales, but were ſo

* To the health of the National Aſſembly.

† The player on the violin, who, with his miſerable figure, has become wrinkled from laughing.

unfortunate as to meet, in our paſſage from Dieppe to Brighton, with a very violent ſtorm. We were two days and two nights at ſea, and beat four and twenty hours off the coaſt of Brighton; and it would be difficult for you, who have formed your calculations of time on dry land, to gueſs what is the length of four and twenty hours in a ſtorm at ſea. At laſt, with great difficulty, we landed on the beach, where we found ſeveral of our friends and acquaintance, who, ſuppoſing that we might be among the paſſengers, ſympathiſed with our danger, and were anxious for our preſervation.

Before the ſtorm became ſo ſerious as to exclude every idea but that of preparing to die with compoſure, I could not help being diverted with the comments on French cuſtoms, and French politics, which paſſed in the cabin. "Ah," ſays one man to his companion, "one had need to go to France, to know how to like old England when one gets back again."—"For my part," rejoined another, "I've never been able to get drunk once the whole time I was in France—not a drop of porter to be had—and as for their victuals, they call a bit of meat of a pound and a half, a fine piece of roaſt beef."—"And pray," added he, turning to one of the ſailors, "What do you think of their National Aſſembly?"—"Why," ſays the ſailor, "if I ben't miſtaken, the National Aſſembly has got ſome points of from the wind."

I own it has ſurprized me not a little, ſince I came to London, to find that moſt of my acquaintance are of the ſame opinion with the ſailor. Every viſitor brings me intelligence from

France

France full of diſmay and horror. I hear of nothing but crimes, aſſaſſinations, torture, and death. I am told that every day witneſſes a conſpiracy; that every town is the ſcene of a maſſacre; that every ſtreet is blackened with a gallows, and every highway deluged with blood. I hear theſe things, and repeat to myſelf, Is this the picture of France? Are theſe the images of that univerſal joy, which called tears into my eyes, and made my heart throb with ſympathy?—To me, the land which theſe mighty magicians have ſuddenly covered with darkneſs, where, waving their evil wand, they have reared the diſmal ſcaffold, have clotted the knife of the aſſaſſin with gore, have called forth the ſhriek of deſpair, and the agony of torture; to me, this land of deſolation appeared dreſt in additional beauty beneath the genial ſmile of liberty. The woods ſeem to caſt a more refreſhing ſhade, and the lawns to wear a brighter verdure, while the carols of freedom burſt from the cottage of the peaſant, and the voice of joy reſounded on the hill, and in the valley.

Muſt I be told that my mind is perverted, that I am become dead to all ſenſations of ſympathy, becauſe I do not weep with thoſe who have loſt part of their ſuperfluities, rather than rejoice that the oppreſſed are protected, that the wronged are redreſſed, that the captive is ſet at liberty, and that the poor have bread? Did the univerſal parent of the human race, implant the feelings of pity in the heart, that they ſhould be confined to the artificial wants of vanity, the ideal deprivations of greatneſs; that they ſhould be fixed beneath the dome of the palace, or

locked within the gate of the chateau; without extending one commiſerating ſigh to the wretched hamlet, as if its famiſhed inhabitants, though not ennobled by *man*, did not bear, at leaſt, the enſigns of nobility ſtamped on our nature by God?

Muſt I hear the charming ſocieties, in which I found all the elegant graces of the moſt poliſhed manners, all the amiable urbanity of liberal and cultivated minds, compared with the moſt rude, ferocious, and barbarous levellers that ever exiſted? Really, ſome of my Engliſh acquaintance, whatever objections they may have to republican principles, do, in their diſcuſſions of French politics, adopt a moſt free and republican ſtyle of cenſure. Nothing can be more democratical than their mode of expreſſion, or diſplay a more levelling ſpirit, than their unqualified contempt of *all* the leaders of the revolution.

It is not my intention to ſhiver lances, in every ſociety I enter, in the cauſe of the National Aſſembly. Yet I cannot help remarking, that, ſince that Aſſembly does not preſume to ſet itſelf up as an example to this country, we ſeem to have very little right to be furiouſly angry, becauſe they think proper to try another ſyſtem of government themſelves. Why ſhould they not be ſuffered to make an experiment in politics? I have always been told, that the improvement of every ſcience depends upon experiment. But I now hear that, inſtead of their new attempt to form the great machine of ſociety upon a ſimple principle of general amity, upon the FEDERATION of its members, they ought

ought to have repaired the feudal wheels and ſprings, by which their anceſtors directed its movements. Yet if mankind had always obſerved this retrograde motion, it would ſurely have led them to few acquiſitions in virtue, or in knowledge; and we might even have been worſhipping the idols of paganiſm at this moment. To forbid, under the pains and penalties of reproach, all attempts of the human mind to advance to greater perfection, ſeems to be proſcribing every art and ſcience. And we cannot much wonder that the French, having received ſo ſmall a legacy of public happineſs from their forefathers, and being ſenſible of the poverty of their own patrimony, ſhould try new methods of tranſmitting a richer inheritance to their poſterity.

Perhaps the improvements which mankind may be capable of making in the art of politics, may have ſome reſemblance to thoſe they have made in the art of navigation. Perhaps our political plans may hitherto have been ſomewhat like thoſe ill-conſtructed miſhapen veſſels, which, unfit to combat with the winds and waves, were only uſed by the antients to convey the warriors of one country to deſpoil and ravage another neighbouring ſtate; which only ſerved to produce an intercourſe of hoſtility; a communication of injury, an exchange of rapine and devaſtation.—But it may poſſibly be within the compaſs of human ability to form a ſyſtem of politics, which, like a modern ſhip of diſcovery, built upon principles that defy the oppoſition of the tempeſtuous elements (" and paſſions are the elements of life"—) inſtead of yielding

yielding to their fury makes them ſubſervient to its purpoſe, and ſailing ſublimely over the untracked ocean, unites thoſe together whom nature ſeemed for ever to have ſeparated, and throws a line of connection acroſs the divided world.

One cauſe of the general diſlike in which the French revolution is held in this country, is the exaggerated ſtories which are carefully circulated by ſuch of the ariſtocrates as have taken refuge in England. They are not all, however, perſons of this deſcription. There is now a young gentleman in London, nephew to the Biſhop de Sens, who has loſt his fortune, his rank, all his high expectations, and yet who has the generoſity to applaud the revolution, and the magnanimity to reconcile himſelf to perſonal calamities, from the conſideration of general good; and who is "faithful found" to his country, "among the faithleſs." I hope this amiable young Frenchman will live to witneſs, and to ſhare the honours, the proſperity of that regenerated country: and I alſo hope that the National Aſſembly of France will anſwer the objections of its adverſaries in the manner moſt becoming its own dignity, by forming ſuch a conſtitution as will render the French nation virtuous, flouriſhing, and happy.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

I AGAIN take up the pen to write to you at the Chateau of Monſ. du F—, from which place I laſt year ſent you the hiſtory of his misfortunes; thoſe misfortunes which have led me to love, as well as admire, the revolution. For you know we are ſo framed that, while we contemplate the deliverance of millions with a ſublime emotion of wonder and exultation, the tears of tenderneſs, the throbbings of ſympathy, are reſerved for the moment when we ſelect one happy family from the great national groupe, and when, amidſt the loud acclamations of an innumerable multitude, we can diſtinguiſh the ſoothing ſounds of domeſtic felicity. I have beheld with aweful aſtoniſhment the ſun of liberty ſpreading its broad blaze over the French hemiſphere; but I have traced with inexpreſſible delight that benignant beam which has chaſed every cloud of calamity from the dwelling of Monſ. du F——.

It ſeems the recompenſe of my French patriotiſm that I have on ſeveral occaſions had the good fortune to witneſs thoſe ſcenes of general felicity, in which it requires but common ſenſibility to partake. I went to Rouen the very day before the King accepted the conſtitution. When the courier arrived with this intelligence, the cannons were immediately fired, the bells of all the churches rung, and the people

ple diſplayed their joy by crowding the ſtreets with bonfires, at the diſtance of every eight or ten yards. I obſerved ſome of the people, who were too poor to contribute a portion of wood, bring for their offering, a part of an old bedſtead, a leg of a broken chair, &c. to feed the flame.

Strangers ſtopped, and congratulated one another in the ſtreets, which reſounded with cries of exultation, among which the ſounds of * Vive le Roi des François," were almoſt loſt amidſt thoſe of † "Vive la nation." "C'eſt la nation qui triomphe. C'eſt la conſtitution qui triomphe."

In the afternoon Te Deum was ſung in the cathedral. The eight hundred electors of the department, who were at that time aſſembled at Rouen, walked in proceſſion, attended by all the officers of the adminiſtration, and ſeveral battalions of the national guard. An immenſe multitude filled every part of the cathedral; the ſounds of the organ and the drums, the voices of the choir, and the acclamations of the people, were mingled together, and rolled through the long aiſles of the building. It was impoſſible to witneſs this religious ſolemnity, and reflect on the greatneſs of the occaſion which had called ſo immenſe a multitude together, that of having completed the glorious work of a free government, without catching the enthuſiaſm which beat high in every boſom.

* Long live the King of the French.

† Long live the nation. It is the nation that triumphs. It is the conſtitution that triumphs.

Indeed

Indeed living in France at preſent, appears to me ſomewhat like living in a region of romance. Events the moſt aſtoniſhing and marvellous are here the occurrences of the day, and every newſpaper is filled with articles of intelligence that will form a new era in the hiſtory of mankind. The ſentiments of the people alſo are elevated far above the pitch of common life. All the motives which moſt powerfully ſtimulate the mind in its ordinary ſtate, ſeem repreſſed in conſideration of the public good, and every ſelfiſh intereſt is ſacrificed with fond alacrity at the altar of the country. For my part, while I contemplate theſe things, I ſometimes think that the age of chivalry, inſtead of being paſt for ever, is juſt returned; not indeed in its erroneous notions of loyalty, honour, and gallantry, which are as little *"à l'ordre du jour," as its dwarfs, giants, and impriſoned damſels; but in its noble contempt of ſordid cares, its ſpirit of unſullied generoſity, and its heroic zeal for the happineſs of others.

The completion of the new government has been celebrated by general demonſtrations of joy throughout the whole kingdom; and thus begins, under the auſpices of liberty, the conſtitutional reign of Lewis the Sixteenth.

It is ſaid that the Abbè Maury, who left France as ſoon as the conſtitution was accepted, is going to Rome, and that the pope intends to give him a cardinal's hat, in recompenſe for the obſtinate battle he has ſo long fought

* The order of the day.

againſt reaſon and philoſophy. The patriots declare that the pope by ſo doing will prove that he has more power than the whole National Aſſembly, * "car il fera *rougir* l' Abbé Maury."

LETTER XXVIII.

WE left our friends in Normandy a fortnight ago, and have pitched our tent at Orleans. Our journey furniſhed many agreeable ſubjects of reflection to my mind, which you well know has ſtrongly caught the contagion of French patriotiſm.

On the windows of every inn at which we ſtopped, we ſaw the little lamps ſtill fixed, which had been lighted at the fêtes given in every town upon the completion of the conſtitution. In all the villages through which we paſſed, I read, inſcribed in great characters, † "La liberté, ou la mort." In ſeveral places I heard that the workmen had contributed ſo many days labour towards the expence of ſending men to the frontiers. In ſhort, wherever we journeyed, liberty ſeemed to have run like electric fire along the country, and pervaded every object in its paſſage. Do you think all the Auſtrians of the earth will ſubdue

* For he will make the Abbé Maury *redden.*
† Liberty or death.

this

this people? Oh no: nothing is more true than, that a people are free whenever with one unanimous ſublime ſentiment they determine to be ſo. By the way, I have heard Homer laughed at by ſome critics, for making an army of thirty thouſand men repeat at the ſame time the ſame ſentiment; yet ſomething of this ſort actually happened at the taking of the Baſtille. The cannoneers called out to the people to retire; * "Car, diſoient-ils, vous périrez inutilement." The people, as if animated by one ſoul, inſtantly replied— † "Non, non, ce ne ſera pas inutilement; nous remplirons le foſſé de nos cadavres."

When we drew near Orleans, we ſaw the country, as far as the eye could reach, covered with grapes, and men, women, and children employed in gathering the vintage. This ſcene gave me a new image of plenty, a new aſpect of the riches of nature, which it was impoſſible to contemplate without the moſt pleaſing emotion. But a deſcription of the vintage will perhaps read better in verſe, than proſe; and I ſhall therefore ſend you a copy of a rhyming letter which I have written to my friend Dr. Moore on this ſubject. Adieu.

* For ſaid they, you will periſh in vain.

† No, no, it will not be in vain! we will fill up the ditch with our dead bodies.

To Dr. MOORE, in anſwer to a Poetical Epiſtle written by him, in Wales, to HELEN MARIA WILLIAMS.

WHILE in long exile far from you I roam,
To ſooth my heart with images of home,
For me, my friend, with rich poetic grace,
The landſcapes of my native iſle you trace;
Her cultur'd meadows, and her laviſh ſhades,
Her winding rivers, and her verdant glades;
Far, as where frowning on the flood below,
The rough Welſh mountain lifts its craggy brow;
Where nature throws aſide her ſofter charms,
And with ſublimer views the boſom warms.

Meanwhile, my ſteps have ſtray'd where Autumn yields
A purple harveſt on the ſunny fields;
Where, bending with their luſcious weight, recline
The loaded branches of the cluſt'ring vine;
There, on the Loire's ſweet banks, a joyful band
Cull'd the rich produce of the fruitful land;
The youthful peaſant, and the village maid,
And feeble age and childhood lent their aid,
The labours of the morning done, they haſte
Where the light dinner in the field is plac'd;
Around the ſoup of herbs a circle make,
And all from one vaſt diſh at once partake;
The vintage-baſkets ſerve, revers'd, for chairs,
And the gay meal is crown'd with tuneleſs airs;
For each in turn muſt ſing with all his might;
And ſome their carols pour in nature's ſpite.

Delightful

Delightful land! Ah, now with gen'ral voice
Thy village ſons and daughters may rejoice.
Thy happy peaſant, now no more a ſlave,
Forbade to taſte one good that nature gave,
Views with the anguiſh of indignant pain
The bounteous harveſt ſpread for him in vain.
Oppreſſion's cruel hand ſhall dare no more
To ſeize with iron gripe his ſcanty ſtore;
And from his famiſh'd infants wring thoſe ſpoils,
The hard-earn'd produce of his uſeful toils:
For now on Gallia's plain the peaſant knows
Thoſe equal rights impartial Heav'n beſtows.
He now, by freedom's ray illumin'd, taught,
Some ſelf-reſpect, ſome energy of thought,
Diſcerns the bleſſings that to all belong,
And lives to guard his humble ſhed from wrong.

Auſpicious Liberty! in vain thy foes
Deride thy ardour, and thy force oppoſe;
In vain refuſe to mark thy ſpreading light,
While, like the mole, they hide their heads in night.
Or hope their eloquence with taper-ray;
Can dim the blaze of philoſophic day;
Thoſe reaſoners who pretend that each abuſe,
Sanction'd by precedent, has ſome bleſt uſe.
Does then ſome chemic power to time belong,
Extracting, by ſome proceſs, right from wrong?
Muſt feudal governments for ever laſt?
Thoſe Gothic piles, the work of ages paſt;
Nor may obtruſive reaſon boldly ſcan,
Far leſs reform the rude miſhapen plan;
The winding labyrinths, the hoſtile towers,
Whence danger threatens, and where horror low'rs
The jealous draw-bridge, and the moat profound,
The lonely dungeon in the cavern'd ground;
The ſullen dome above thoſe central caves,
Where lives one tyrant, and a hoſt of ſlaves?

Ah

Ah, Freedom, on this renovated ſhore,
That fabric frights the moral world no more!
Shook to its baſis, by thy powerful ſpell,
Its triple walls in maſſy fragments fell;
While, riſing from the hideous wreck, appears
The temple thy firm arm ſublimely rears;
Of fair proportions, and of ſimple grace,
A manſion worthy of the human race.
For me, the witneſs of thoſe ſcenes, whoſe birth
Forms a new era in the ſtoried earth;
Oft while with glowing breaſt thoſe ſcenes I view,
They lead, ah friend belov'd, my thoughts to you!
Ah, ſtill each fine emotion they impart,
With your idea mingles in my heart;
You, whoſe warm boſom, whoſe expanded mind,
Have ſhar'd this glorious triumph of mankind;
You, whom I oft have heard, with gen'rous zeal,
With all that truth can urge, or pity feel,
Refute the pompous argument that tried
The common cauſe of millions to deride;
With reaſon's force the plauſive ſophiſt hit,
Or dart on folly the quick flaſh of wit.
Too ſwift, my friend, the moments wing'd their flight,
That gave at once inſtruction and delight;
That ever from your ample ſtores of thought
To my ſmall ſtock ſome new acceſſion brought.
How oft remembrance, while this boſom bleeds,
My pefinve fancy to your dwelling leads;
Where, round your chearful hearth, I weeping trace
The ſocial circle, and my vacant place! —
When to that dwelling friendſhip's tie endears,
When ſhall I haſten with the "joy of tears?"
That joy whoſe keen ſenſation ſwells to pain,
And ſtrives to utter what it feels, in vain.

LETTER

LETTER XXIX.

ORLEANS is a very antient town, built, or rather rebuilt, by the Emperor Aurelian, upon the ruins of another town, called Genabium. It takes its preſent name of Orleans, or the golden city, from the Emperor Aurelian. This town is large and handſome. The principal ſtreet, which extends the whole length of the town, is regularly built, and is clean, cheerful, and well lighted every night, by lamps hung acroſs it. Here is a noble cathedral of exquiſite workmanſhip, and of which the firſt ſtone was laid by Henry the Fourth; a circumſtance which makes me contemplate the building with additional pleaſure. Henry the Fourth is, you know, the only hero, ancient or modern, of whom I am at all enamoured; and my admiration of him has been lately conſiderably increaſed by the peruſal of a charming little book, entitled, *"De l'Amour de Henri quatre pour les Lettres."—There was but this wanting to complete my enthuſiaſm for Henry the Fourth. I ſhould find it difficult, indeed, to avoid loving a hero who united a taſte for letters with all the great, and all the amiable qualities. A little incident, which I have juſt heard, is one proof, among many others, of the love and veneration in which his memory has long been held in France.—Ten

* The love of Henry the Fourth for Literature.

years

years before the revolution, a gentleman walking along the Pont Neuf, was accoſted by a beggar, who implored his charity. * "Au nom de Dieu! Monſieur," ſaid the beggar—"de la Sainte Vierge!"—The gentleman walked on: the beggar called upon half the ſaints in the calendar; the gentleman remained inexorable. At length they paſſed the ſtatue of Henry the Fourth. † "Au nom de Henri quatre! Monſieur," ſaid the beggar. "Au nom de Henri quatre!" repeated the gentleman, ſtarting from his reverie: "voici un louis, mon ami."—But I muſt lead you from the Pont Neuf to a magnificent bridge built within theſe few years, at Orleans, acroſs the river Loire. This river, which, in general, glides ſlowly and gently along its beautiful banks, ſometimes receiving in its boſom the torrents which fall from the mountains of Auvergne, aſſumes a very different character, overflows its banks, bears away bridges in its courſe, ſpreads itſelf over the adjacent country, and not only fills the ſtreets in the lower part of the town of Orleans, but even the houſes; and the poor people who inhabit them have been ſometimes obliged to ſave themſelves in their garrets, and receive proviſions brought to them in boats, and handed up to them upon the point of pikes. Uſually, however, in order to prevent theſe evils, whenever the Loire begins to riſe, a courier is diſpatched to give notice of its approach. The courier, in general, gallops faſ-

* In the name of God!—of the Holy Virgin!

† In the name of Henry the Fourth, Sir. In the name of Henry the Fourth! Here is a louis, my friend.

ter

ter than the river, and by this means the people are prepared for its reception.

We have lodgings in the Place du Martroy, in a ſpacious handſome houſe which formerly belonged to Monſ. d'Orleans, and where the archives of his family were depoſited. But having loſt, ſince the revolution, the extenſive domains which he poſſeſſed round this town, his ſeignorial rights over the foreſt of Orleans, a foreſt of fifty miles in extent, he has thought proper to ſell this houſe, in conſequence of which we are extremely well lodged. Do not, however, be ſurpriſed if I am not very methodical in the details I ſhall ſend you, and if you ſhould find my ideas ſomewhat more indiſtinct than uſual; for I aſſure you the things I hear and ſee, from the window at which I am writing, are ſufficient to confuſe a ſtronger head than mine. You ſhall judge. Before our windows, which overlook the Place du Martroy, there are at this moment two muſicians mounted on chairs; one plays on the violin, while the other ſings a very merry patriotic ſong, and the people join in chorus. At a little diſtance there arrived half an hour ago a mountebank, preceded by a trumpet, a drum, and a French-horn. He is now haranguing an immenſe croud who ſurround his cabriolet, with a degree of impetuoſity, and a violence of geſticulation, which belong only to a Frenchman. He is at ſome diſtance from the window, ſo that I loſe much of his eloquence; but I have ſeen him diſplay a fine chapelet, which he declares was given to him by the empreſs of all the Ruſſias; and I have heard him boaſt the efficacious qualities of a certain precious pill, of which he

is

is in poſſeſſion, and which, he ſays, cures *"*toutes* les maladies, et pluſieurs *autres*." To reſiſt a pill of ſuch extraordinary virtue is impoſſible: the poor people lift up their hands; he feels their pulſes, orders for every complaint a box of pills, and receives the little paper money, called bons, in return. Not far from the mountebank is a man with a puppet-ſhow, in which, for one liard, many ſurpriſing things are to be ſeen. †"Vous allez voir, meſſieurs," ſays he, in a voice which makes itſelf heard in ſpite of the muſic, the chorus and the mountebank; "Vous allez voir la ſéance de la conſtitution! Voici le roi dans ſon fauteuil; voici"—But he is interrupted by the beating of a drum, which calls the crowd to a little ſtage, where a man and a woman are going to act a comedy. Near the comedians is a fortune-teller, who, placing one end of a long pipe at the ear of thoſe who wiſh to learn their deſtiny, and putting the other end into his own mouth, explains, in a voice only heard by the perſon concerned, the book of fate, reveals the ſecrets of futurity, and laviſhes wealth and proſperity at the moderate price of deux ſous.—Pleaſure and buſineſs are united on the Place du Martroy; for not only does it preſent fine ſights, and reſound with patriotic ſongs, but there, by way of interlude, the corn-market is held: gowns, petticoats, ſweetmeats, grapes, and Baſtilles of ſugar are alſo ſold in little booths erected for that purpoſe, and which ſomewhat

* All diſeaſes, and a great many others.

† You ſhall ſee, gentlemen—you ſhall ſee the fitting of the conſtitution! Here is the king in his chair of ſtate.

diſſ-

disfigure the ſquare. But the French are an amiable, accommodating people, and permit many things of this kind which would not be ſuffered in England. When I was at the National Aſſembly, I remarked that the paſſages on each ſide were filled with little ſhops, where books, paper, &c. are ſold. I believe, if this were attempted in the avenues to the Houſe of Commons, our honourable ſenators would very ſoon order the paſſages, as they ſometimes do the gallery, to be *cleared*. But let us return for a moment to the Place du Martroy, where at preſent the people leave the muſicians, the mountebank, the puppet-ſhow man, the comedians, and the fortune-teller, and fly to meet the brave protectors of their country. The volunteers of the department are juſt arrived in their way to the frontiers, and are to be lodged in the houſes of their fellow-citizens, by whom they are received with all the enthuſiaſm of patriotiſm. Several peaſants too old to fight for their country have offered to aſſiſt in maintaining, by the ſweat of their brow, the wives and children of thoſe who are gone to the frontiers.

The French revolution is not only ſublime in a general view, but is often beautiful when conſidered in detail. Its hiſtory abounds with circumſtances that would embelliſh the page of the Greek or Roman annals. But the old remark, that no man is a hero to his valet de chambre, may be applied to great events, as well as great characters. The French revolution is viewed too near to excite the ſame veneration in the preſent age which it will probably awaken in the minds of poſterity. It wants that mellowed tint

which

which is produced by time. Succeeding generations will perhaps aſſociate the Tennis-court of Verſailles, and the Champ de Mars, with the Forum and the Capitol. For the prejudices which now obſcure the revolution are mortal, and will die with the preſent race, and poſterity will view it through a clearer medium. Poſterity will not demand, contrary to what appears the law of our nature, "univerſal good," unmixed with "partial evil;" but will contemplate the revolution in the ſame manner, as we gaze at a ſublime landſcape, of which the general effect is great and noble, and where ſome little points of aſperity, ſome minute deformities, are loſt in the overwhelming majeſty of the whole.

LETTER XXX.

IT is at preſent what is called the bel air in France, to take a journey to Bruſſels. The people of diſtinction go to ſhow their importance, and people of no diſtinction go in imitation of others. A young Frenchman, the ſon of a perſon who was formerly in power, went lately to join the emigrants, and was much aſtoniſhed, upon his arrival at Bruſſels, to find, that inſtead of being well received, the ariſtocrates were inclined to put him to death. The reaſon of this was, that they recollected he had, ſome years before the revolu-

revolution, on a particular occaſion, eſpouſed the intereſts of the people. * "Il faut bien s'examiner," ſaid the gentleman who related this circumſtance, "avant d'aller à Bruxelles, ſi dans quelque moment de la vie, on a ſenti de l'amour pour ſes concitoyens, ou fait une belle action." I received a letter a few days ago from a friend of mine at Paris, which mentions the departure of a pretty young woman for Germany, with whom I had a ſlight acquaintance. Her own titles to nobility were very new, and very inconſiderable; but ſhe was acquainted with ſome women of high rank who had fled to Germany. She came to a relation's houſe, one morning, at the hour of breakfaſt, and, almoſt breathleſs with agitation, told her that ſhe was inſtantly going to leave France. "I know," ſaid ſhe, "that my movements are watched; but I have taken every poſſible precaution for my own ſafety, and intend to travel through by-roads." "My dear couſin," replied her relation, "what a wild plan is this!—Why will you leave us? Be aſſured you are in perfect ſafety—nobody thinks of *you*." † "Ah! je vous demande pardon," replied the young woman; "on a des yeux ſur moi." "Well," ſaid her couſin, "if you are abſolutely determined to go, at leaſt ſtay and breakfaſt with me; here is ſome caffé à la crême." "Ah, my dear couſin," replied the young woman, in a moſt pathetic accent, "du caffé à la crême!—I dare not taſte it upon any

* You muſt examine yourſelf carefully before you go to Bruſſels, if in ſome moment of your life you have felt any love for your fellow-citizens, or performed a good action.

† Ah! I beg your pardon—they have their eyes upon me; account

account—If madame la ducheſſe de ———, or madame la comteſſe, were to hear of it, they would never forgive me—they know that caffé à la crême does me harm; and they intereſt themſelves ſo much in my health, that they have ſtrictly forbidden my taſting it."

Though the great maſs of the French nation, ſufficiently enlightened to diſcern their real intereſts, cheriſh with fond enthuſiaſm the bleſſings of liberty, it is not ſurpriſing that a revolution, which has levelled every diſtinction that vanity loves to create; expoſed the folly of every prejudice that pride had inculcated, and that ſervility had learned to revere; and which has made a ſtep towards perfection ſo rapid, ſo aſtoniſhing in the progreſs of human reaſon—it is not ſurpriſing that ſuch a revolution ſhould have many enemies among that claſs of perſons whoſe vanity, ambition, or intereſt, are affected by the ſuppreſſion of thoſe abuſes and errors, from which they enjoyed the moſt partial advantages. Some excuſe may, perhaps, be found in the weakneſs of human nature, and the prejudices of education, for the ariſtocracy of Monſ. d'Artois, or Monſ. de Condé. But the ariſtocracy to which common ſenſe can give no quarter, is that which you ſometimes find in the perſons of the bon, ci-devant tiers état; that claſs which by the revolution is raiſed from contempt and degradation, into importance and reſpect.

A beautiful young woman, formerly a ducheſs, with whom I was in company at Paris, told me ſhe had remarked, that even the ſeaſons were changed ſince the revolution, and that the

the climate of France had become ſtormy and diſagreeable. I could only ſmile at her folly, and pity it. But when the wife of a merchant, or ſhopkeeper, talks in the ſame ſtyle, you feel provoked, inſtead of diverted, by her abſurdity.

The biſhop of Orléans, who is deſcended from the ancient nobility of France, has diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his patriotiſm; but there are at Orléans a hundred and fifty chanoines, who are far from being patriots. Theſe chanoines enjoyed each two or three thouſand livres a year for chanting Latin hymns in the cathedral. The cathedral being now transformed into a pariſh-church, theſe hymns are no longer ſung; and the chanoines are reduced to live upon half their former income. Theſe hundred and fifty chanoines had certainly a hundred and fifty cooks, and theſe cooks probably have families. The chanoines and the cooks have both loſt their places, and conſequently they and their families are ariſtocrates.

By the way, I have found out that an ariſtocrate always begins a political converſation by aſſuring you that he is not an ariſtocrate. He will tell you, "that there certainly were intolerable abuſes in the old government, and that no perſon wiſhed more ſincerely than himſelf to ſee thoſe abuſes reformed. But," he will add, "to take away the king's power, to deprive the nobility of their privileges, and the clergy of their revenues, is puſhing things to an extremity, at which every honeſt mind ſhudders. If the National Aſſembly had made a reform without injuring theſe orders of the ſtate, they would

would have been applauded by the whole world." This reminds me of a paſſage in Monſ. Beaumarchais' comedy of the Follies of a Day. "I was told," ſays Figaro, on the ſubject of writing a book, "that if I took care to ſay nothing of politics, nothing of morality, of governments, of the clergy, or of perſons in power, and then ſubmitted my book to the inſpection of the keeper of the ſeals, and obtained an 'approbation,' and 'privilege,' I might, after uſing theſe precautions, write with the moſt perfect freedom."

An old Frenchman, paſt threeſcore years and ten, was aſked lately how he liked the revolution. * "La révolution," ſaid he, "me ruine, et me tue, mais elle me fait vivre."

The volunteers left Orléans this morning, in order to proceed to the frontiers. They were drawn up on the Place du Martroy, and, after affectionately embracing their friends, and wiping away a few tears, which probably the recollection of home excited, they ordered, by way of cordial, the reviving air of ça ira, and marched off, ſinging in chorus.

* The revolution ruins me, and kills me, but it makes me live.

LETTER XXXI.

THE principal article of commerce at Orléans, is that of refining ſugar. We went yeſterday to ſee the proceſs. In one ſtage of its progreſs the ſugar is clarified with the blood of oxen: it is poured into veſſels of an immenſe ſize, and appears a liquid of a deep red. I own thoſe frightful reſervoirs ſtruck my imagination as if ſtained with the blood of Africans.

The long train of calamities which are the portion of that unhappy race, crowded in ſad ſucceſſion upon my mind, and I obſerved, with a degree of horror which I could not repreſs, the proceſs of luxury obtained for the inhabitants of one part of the globe, by the wrongs, the agonies, the deſpair of the inhabitants of another part.—Alas! why is there ſo much more miſery in this world than benevolence can cure? Why, in the public diſcuſſions in France and in England, on the Slave Trade, are the poſſibilities of gain and loſs calculated with ſuch nice preciſion? Why are crimes and injuſtice, deſolation and death, treated in a ſtyle ſo very mercantile that humanity liſtens in deſpair to their deliberations?

From thence we went to ſee a very conſiderable manufactory for ſpinning cotton, which has been eſtabliſhed here by an Engliſh gentleman, to whom we are obliged for that cordial hoſpitality, which is the ancient and honourable

characteriſtic of our country, and which is ſo peculiarly grateful to the heart when received in a land of ſtrangers.

This manufacture, while it diſplays the wonderful power of mechaniſm, gives occaſion alſo to the exerciſe of humanity, by employing not only a great number of men, but fourteen hundred women and children.

The gentleman to whom the manufacture belongs, related to me the following circumſtance:—He happened to be in the National Aſſembly at Verſailles, when the king declared that he would give orders for diſbanding the army which ſurrounded Paris, and would himſelf come to the Maiſon de Ville, in compliance with the wiſhes of his people. Mr. F——, after taking a copy of the king's harangue with his pencil, immediately mounted his horſe, and galloped to Paris, in order to carry this intelligence. At the Pont Neuf he was ſtopped, the bridle of his horſe ſeized, and the people wanted to take him to la Maiſon de Ville. He told them that he was an Engliſhman, the friend of liberty, and had galloped all the way from Verſailles, in order to bring them good news.

The people conducted him to the Palais Royal, and there he diſmounted. A table was placed in the court of the Palais Royal, upon which he ſtood, and read over and over again the king's harangue. After having remained there a conſiderable time, he went into a coffee-houſe of the Palais Royal to refreſh himſelf, and then enquired for his horſe. The horſe was not to be found. Mr. F—— left a note at the coffee-houſe, intreating that the perſon who had

had taken care of the Engliſhman's horſe, while reading the king's ſpeech, in the Palais Royal, would deliver him to the maſter of the coffee-houſe.

A few days after, an anſwer was ſent to Mr. F——, informing him, that the Engliſh horſe had gone back to Verſailles, in order to conduct the king to Paris; and was again gone to the country upon buſineſs of importance to the nation, but that whenever he returned he ſhould be ſent to his maſter.

The horſe accordingly arrived, but not without having ſuffered a little for his ſervices to the ſtate; and, though he was ever after particularly cheriſhed by Mr. F——, he died in the ſecond year of French liberty; and I have ſome thoughts of writing his epitaph.

Nothing, it is ſaid, could exceed the aſtoniſhment and conſternation of the French court, when the intelligence that the Baſtille was taken reached Verſailles. This event appeared ſo incredible that the courtiers could ſcarcely perſuade themſelves it was true. That the people ſhould have the inſolence to complain becauſe they were threatened with famine—that, when the government had drawn an army to the gates of Paris in order to enforce ſubmiſſion, the Pariſians ſhould dare to riſe into tumult—were things ſufficiently extraordinary—but that they ſhould, almoſt in the view of that army, take the Baſtille, appeared to the court of Verſailles as miraculous as if the courſe of nature had been changed, and the order of the univerſe broken.

I lately heard an account of a converſation which paſſed at Verſailles, on the morning of the 14th of July, 1789, and which proves how little the court were prepared for the memorable event of that immortal day.

A French gentleman, remarkable for his taciturnity and ſang-froid, things that ſeldom enter into the compoſition of a Frenchman, had occaſion to go from Paris to Verſailles on that morning, in order to have a conference with the miniſter upon ſome private buſineſs. He found two of the miniſters together; and when the particular object of his viſit was diſcuſſed, one of the miniſters ſaid to him with a careleſs air, "Well, ſir, are there ſtill tumults at Paris?"

"The people talk of going to the garde-de-meubles," replied the gentleman.

"The garde-de-meubles!" repeated the miniſter: what, the king's garde-de-meubles."

"Yes, and they have already been at the Hôtel des Invalides."

"And for what purpoſe?" ſaid the miniſter with increaſing ſurpriſe.

"They ſeized upon all the arms," reſumed the gentleman; preſerving his uſual ſang-froid; "and if a man has two fuſees, he gives one to his neighbour."

"Well," ſaid the miniſter, ſhrugging up his ſhoulders, "and what did they do next?"

"Why, I believe," ſaid the gentleman, "they then went to the diſtrict."

"The diſtrict!" exclaimed the miniſter: "pray what is the diſtrict?"

"An

"An invention of yeſterday," replied the gentleman: "the people have alſo another invention of the ſame date, I believe, which they call a permanent committee, and they have now got cannon."

"Cannon!" repeated the miniſter; "and pray what do they propoſe to do with cannon?"

"Why, they talk of taking the Baſtille."

"Very good!—excellent!" ſaid the miniſter, burſting into a violent fit of laughter: "this is really a pleaſant conceit enough. And pray who is at the head of this rabble?"

"I really do not know," ſaid the gentleman coldly: "but all the people in Paris ſeem to be of the ſame mind."

"Well," ſaid the miniſter, turning to his colleague, "I think we had better not mention theſe diſagreeable matters to the king."

Notwithſtanding this precaution however, the king a few hours after was let into the whole ſecret.

LETTER XXXII.

THE ſtatue of the celebrated Jeanne d'Arc, the maid of Orléans, is erected in the principal ſtreet of the town. Wherever I travel in France, it ſeems as if I were haunted by this Jeanne d'Arc. I left her lately at Rouen, and here

here I find her at Orléans; and in both places I fancy ſhe looks at me with an air of reproach. This monument, erected at Orléans, in honour of her exploits, by Charles the Seventh, is a ſtriking teſtimony of the barbarous ſtate of the arts at that period. The Virgin Mary is placed in the middle of the monument, holding a dead Chriſt on her knees: on one ſide is Charles the Seventh kneeling, and on the other the Maid of Orleans in the ſame attitude. Their figures are ſo rude, miſhapen, and groteſque, that it requires ſome deliberation to determine which is Charles the Seventh, and which is the Maid of Orleans.

Every year on the eighth of May, the day on which Jeanne d'Arc chaſed the Engliſh, and raiſed the ſiege of Orléans, there is a ſolemn proceſſion in this town, in commemoration of that event. The biſhop, attended by all the clergy, the magiſtrates, and the troops, walk in proceſſion to the cathedral. The principal figure in this proceſſion is a young boy, dreſſed in a fantaſtic manner, who is the repreſentative of the Maid of Orléans. Prayers of thankſgiving for the deliverance of the town are ſaid at the cathedral, after which a ſermon is preached, wherein the magnanimous virtues of Jeanne d'Arc are celebrated; and, by way of giving relief to the picture, the preacher never fails to paint in the darkeſt colours the crimes of the Engliſh, and their deteſtable cruelty towards this heroine, to whom, as Mr. Hume the hiſtorian juſtly remarks, the more generous ſuperſtition of the ancients would have erected altars. When the guilt of our nation has been made ſufficiently

ſufficiently manifeſt, the ſermon concludes, a hymn is ſung, and the day ends with a public entertainment. But I muſt not neglect to mention a charming inſtitution eſtabliſhed by Monſ. d'Orléans in honour of Jeanne d'Arc. The curés of Orléans each chooſe from their reſpective pariſhes, the young girl whom they conſider as the moſt amiable, the moſt modeſt, the moſt virtuous. Among theſe girls ſhe who is moſt diſtinguiſhed for thoſe qualities which are the beſt ornament of her ſex, is married on this day to the lover of her choice, with a portion of fifteen hundred livres, beſtowed by Monſ. d'Orléans. Is it poſſible, do you think, to make a more amiable uſe of fifteen hundred livres, than thus to render them the means of conferring happineſs on love and virtue?

A hat which belonged to the Maid of Orléans is ſtill religiouſly kept in a convent in this place. How Jeanne d'Arc's hat got into this convent, I know not; for, when I aſked to ſee it, I was told that no woman could be admitted within thoſe walls. Perhaps the reverend fathers relaxed from the uſual ſeverity of their order in favour of ſo extraordinary a woman as Jeanne d'Arc: but the reſt of her ſex muſt not expect the ſame indulgence, and I ſhall certainly leave Orleans without having ſeen the hat.

LETTER XXXIII.

THE wife of Jean Jaques Rouſſeau is a native of Orléans, where her family now live. This woman, though certainly no congenial ſpirit with Jean Jaques, has, I am told, caught from him much elevation of ſentiment, and pride of independence. You can, in ſhort, perceive that ſhe has been the companion of a great man. I heard lately an incident characteriſtic enough of Rouſſeau. At a friend's houſe, at dinner, he praiſed the wine: his friend ſent him fifty bottles. Rouſſeau felt himſelf offended; but as the preſent was offered by an old friend, he determined to accept ten bottles, and returned forty. A ſhort time after he invited his friend and his family to ſupper. When they arrived they found Rouſſeau very buſy turning the ſpit. "How extraordinary is it," exclaimed his friend, "to ſee the firſt genius of Europe employed in turning a ſpit!" "Why," anſwered Rouſſeau, with great ſimplicity and ſang-froid, "if I were not to turn the ſpit, you would certainly loſe your ſupper: my wife is gone to buy a ſallad, and the ſpit muſt be turned." At ſupper Rouſſeau produced, for the firſt time, the wine which his friend had ſent him: but no ſooner had he taſted it, than he ſuddenly put the glaſs from his lips, exclaiming with the moſt violent emotion, that it was not the ſame wine he had drank at his friend's

friend's houſe, who he perceived had a deſign to poiſon him. In vain his friend proteſted his innocence: Rouſſeau's imagination, once poſſeſſed by this idea,

——" diſplaced the mirth; broke the good
" Meeting with moſt admir'd diſorder."

SHAKSPEARE.

His friend was immediately obliged to retire, and they never met again.

You, who are an admirer of Rouſſeau, will be pleaſed to hear of a tribute of enthuſiaſm paid to his memory lately by two of our countrymen. Theſe young Engliſhmen went to viſit the tomb of this lover of nature, which is placed in a beautiful little iſland on the eſtate of Monſ. Girardin. Not long before their arrival, ſome profane mortal had dared to inſult the ſacred aſhes of Jean Jaques; and Monſ. Girardin, filled with indignation at this atrocious conduct, had given orders, that no perſon, without a particular admiſſion from himſelf, ſhould henceforth be permitted to viſit the iſland. In vain our young Engliſhmen made proteſtations of their profound veneration for Rouſſeau; in vain they implored Monſieur Girardin's boatman to conduct them acroſs the ſtream. The boatman, ſurly as Charon himſelf, adhered inflexibly to the orders of his maſter. The young Engliſhmen, finding him inexorable, threw off their clothes, jumped into the ſtream, and ſwam to the iſland.—The gentleman who related to me this circumſtance, told me, that he and a friend had viſited together this iſland, and, kneeling at the tomb of Rouſſeau, had burnt a book, publiſhed a ſhort time after his death by Diderot, in

which he had treated the memory of Rouſſeau with the moſt cruel indignity: and this he had done from a very unworthy motive. He had heard that the Confeſſions of Rouſſeau were going to be publiſhed; and concluding that he ſhould be ill treated in thoſe Confeſſions, on account of his quarrel with Rouſſeau, he determined to be beforehand in abuſe. But when the Confeſſions were publiſhed, it was found that the feeling heart of Jean Jaques could not detach itſelf from his former friend, who had always continued to poſſeſs a place in his affections.—Monſ. Girardin was abſent from home, when the ſacrifice of Diderot's book was offered at Rouſſeau's tomb. When he returned, his boatman told him, that during his abſence two gentlemen had performed ſome witchcraft or other at the tomb; that he had obſerved them at a little diſtance; that they had ſtruck a ſtone, brought out a flame, and kept it burning an extraordinary length of time. Monſ. Girardin enquired into the meaning of theſe myſterious rites, and received an account of the ſacrifice.

The celebrated opera-dancer, Mademoiſelle Theodore, whoſe talents I am told are not confined to ſuperior excellence in dancing, had an enthuſiaſtic admiration of Rouſſeau. She always carried a volume of his works in her pocket to the rehearſals at the opera, and uſed to read in the pauſes of the dance. One day having heard that Rouſſeau was in want of a cook, ſhe dreſſed herſelf in a coarſe ſtuff gown, a coloured apron, and a cloth cap, and went in this diſguiſe to offer him her ſervices.

After

After Rouſſeau's death, Mademoiſelle Theodore made a pilgrimage to his grave; and there, in the true ſpirit of enthuſiaſtic homage, cutting off one of the long treſſes of her fine hair, ſhe hung it as an offering upon his tomb.

LETTER XXXIV.

A BLACKSMITH came to our lodgings this morning, to mend the lock of a door. I aſked him if he would not willingly leave his trade to fight for the liberty of his country. * "Oui, madame," ſaid he, "il faut combattre pour la liberté, parceque ſi on eſt tué, c'eſt l'affaire d'un inſtant, et c'eſt fini; au lieu qu'étant eſclave on s'ennuye toute ſa vie."

This is market-day at Orléans, and I have juſt been ſtanding with a little circle of country-people, who, after the buſineſs of the market was done, ranged themſelves round an old woman, who had the advantage over the reſt of the groupe, of having attained the accompliſhment of reading. She read to them a newſpaper, to which the audience liſtened with ſuch eager at-

* Yes, madam, we muſt fight for liberty, becauſe if one is killed, it is the affair of a moment; inſtead of that, being a ſlave, you are weary all your life.

tention,

tention, as reminded me of that animated picture of our divine poet, when he deſcribes

——— " a ſmith,
" The whilſt his iron did on the anvil cool,
" With open mouth ſwallowing a taylor's news."

The old woman received a liard for her trouble from each of her auditors, and they are now diſcuſſing the conduct of their legiſlators, and arranging the fabric of their new government, with that noble freedom of debate which gives

" An hour's importance to the poor man's heart."

One ſubject of complaint among the ariſtocrates is, that, ſince the revolution, they are obliged to drive through the ſtreets with caution: the life of a citizen is now conſidered as of ſome value, and the poor people on foot cannot be trampled upon, by the horſes of the rich people in carriages, with the ſame impunity as formerly. * " C'eſt ſi incommode," ſaid an ariſtocrate to me lately, " quand je vais dans ma voiture en campagne; le peuple ne ſe range pas comme autrefois—ces gens-là ſont d'une inſolence incroyable—on eſt obligé de prendre bien garde de ne les pas écraſer, et cela demande du tems." Madame du Pompadour, miſtreſs to Lewis XV. who always travelled with great expedition, was paſſing through Orléans, when her coachman drove over a poor woman, whom age and infirmity prevented from getting time

* It is ſo inconvenient, when I go to the country in my carriage; the people will not get out of the way as they uſed to do—they are really become intolerably inſolent—you are obliged to take ſuch care not to run over them, and that coſts ſo much time.

enough out of the way, and ſhe was killed upon the ſpot. The coachman ſtopped the carriage, and the ſervants told their miſtreſs that the poor woman was killed. * "Eh bien," ſaid ſhe, with the moſt perfect ſang-froid, and flinging a louis d'or out of the window, "voila de quoi la fairre enterrer: allez, cocher." Is it poſſible to hear of every feeling of humanity being thus inſulted, without a degree of indignation which can only be ſoothed by the reflection that ſuch monſtrous evils exiſt no longer? Is it poſſible to hear this incident without rejoicing, that a ſyſtem of government which led to ſuch depravation of mind is laid in ruins? For my part, I confeſs myſelf ſo hardened a patriot, that I rejoice to ſee the lower order of people in this country have loſt ſomewhat of that too obſequious politeneſs for which they were once diſtinguiſhed; and that whenever they find themſelves in the ſlighteſt degree offended, they aſſume a tone of manly independence. While we were walking yeſterday along the very ſquare where the poor old woman was killed, I heard a day-labourer ſay, in an angry tone of voice, to a gentleman, by whom he thought himſelf ill-treated, † "Monſieur, nous ſommes égaux—je ſuis citoyen, monſieur, *tout* comme un autre." Some of our company were ſhocked at his inſolence, while I, recollecting the poor old woman, could not help repeating to myſelf, ‡ "Ah!

* Well, here is ſomething to bury her—go on, coachman.

† Sir, we are equals—I am a citizen, ſir, as well as another.

‡ Ah! my friend, never forget that you are a citizen as well as another.

mon

mon ami, n'oubliez jamais que vous êtes citoyen *tout* comme un autre."

A number of poor people in Orléans gain their livelihood by conveying goods in little carts from the quay to the houſes of the merchants. This little cart forms the ſtock in trade of a poor family, together with an aſs, who is an animal that can accommodate himſelf to a ſlight dinner, without complaining. The aſs is placed between the ſhafts; on one ſide is the maſter of the cart, on the other his wife: and all their children, to whatever number they amount, ranged in front, and holding a long cord, which is tied to the cart, aſſiſt in drawing it along.

I never ſee theſe little family proceſſions without a melancholy emotion. It ſeems to me a hard lot, to be forced to gain ſcanty bread by dragging along this wretched cart from morning till night. But, fortunately, the poor people themſelves are of a different opinion: I perceive no marks of ſadneſs on their countenances; and when the cart returns empty, and allows them a little reſpite from labour, I frequently hear them ſinging ça ira, with all the exultation of true patriots.

The bleſſings of the revolution have reached even their little ſhed. If they are poor, they know they cannot be oppreſſed; and feel, no doubt, with conſcious pride and pleaſure, that they alſo are now "citoyens, * *tout* comme un autre."

* As well as another.

Two

Two gentlemen were converſing together this morning upon public affairs. After diſcuſſing many political points, one of them ſaid to the other, whom he perceived to be a little violent in his ſentiments, † "Mais après tout, il faut de la modération."

"On parle tant de la modération," anſwered the democrate, in the moſt angry tone in the world: "ma foi, monſieur, on n'a pas pris la Baſtille avec de la limonade."

LETTER XXXV.

I HAVE been to viſit a chateau about a league from Orléans; part of which was built by the celebrated Lord Bolingbroke, and in which he paſſed ſome years of his exile, with his wife, the niece of Madame de Maintenon. Before the windows of the chateau riſes a beautiful ſmall river, called le Loiret, which, after a winding courſe of three leagues, through a charming country, falls into the Loire. The grounds of this chateau are in ſome parts formed into long alleys, ſhaded by venerable trees, in others ſpread into lawns, through which the clear

† But after all we muſt have ſome moderation.—They ſpeak ſo much of moderation—Faith, ſir, the Baſtille was not taken with lemonade.

Loiret

Loiret purſues its way. Lord Bolingbroke probably found this retirement well adapted for philoſophical contemplation, and had there ſufficient leiſure to

> "Expatiate free on all this ſcene of man,
> "A mighty maze, but not without a plan."

In this retreat he wrote the Patriot King. A company of French and Engliſh were dining with Lord Bolingbroke at this place, when the news arrived of the death of the Duke of Marlborough, his ancient enemy. Some of the company had ſervility enough to pay their court to Lord Bolingbroke, by mentioning ſome circumſtances to the diſadvantage of the Duke of Marlborough. At length a Frenchman, who was preſent, aſked Lord Bolingbroke his opinion of him. "Sir," ſaid he, "Marlborough was ſo great a man, that I have forgot all his faults."—The Loiret deſerves to be conſidered as a ſort of claſſical river: for, if a famous Engliſh philoſopher had his dwelling at its ſource, a far more amiable French philoſopher lived ſome time at the mouth of this little ſtream: a philoſopher, of whom not only his own country, but human nature may be proud; and whoſe writings tend to awaken the pureſt affections, the moſt ſoothing emotions, of the human heart. This writer was Fenelon, the mild, the perſuaſive preacher of virtue. I have read Greſſet's charming poem of Ver-Vert, with particular pleaſure, on the banks of that river, which his hero in evil hour ſailed down; when the nuns of Nantes, hearing of his renown, write

——— "à la

——— " à la ſupérieure,
" Pour la prier que l'oiſeau plein d'attraits
" Soit pour un tems amené par la Loire,
" Et que, conduit au rivage Nautais,
" Lui-même il puiſſe y jouir de ſa gloire,
" Et ſe prêter à de tendres ſouhaits."

The happy playful irony of this poem is perhaps unrivalled, except by Pope's Rape of the Lock, which, to all the ſprightly graces, the agreeable raillery of Ver-Vert, adds the charm of the moſt enchanting poetic machinery.

Every Sunday evening, during the month of October, as ſoon as it is dark, four men, dreſſed in black, walk through the town of Orléans, and at the corner of every ſtreet ring a loud heavy bell, which ſends forth a moſt diſmal ſound; after which they call upon the people to remember the dead, and pray for the repoſe of their ſouls. Nothing can be more gloomy than this ſuperſtitious ceremony, which laſts till after All-Saints day, when a ſolemn ſervice for the dead is performed in all the Roman Catholic churches.

LETTER

LETTER XXXVI.

WHEN a French girl is intended for the wife of a merchant, ſhe is carefully inſtructed in arithmetic, after ſhe leaves the convent, where ſhe is uſually taught little more than to count her beads. After ſhe is married ſhe acts as her huſband's firſt clerk, and paſſes the whole day in his counting-houſe. Some advantages ariſe from this practice; ſince a French woman, if her huſband dies, is capable of carrying on his buſineſs till her children are of a proper age to ſucceed to it; and in the mean time ſhe knows exactly the ſtate of his affairs. Whereas, the wife of an Engliſh merchant, ſometimes from being entirely ignorant of his real ſituation, indulges herſelf in a mode of living which haſtens on his ruin, and receives like a thunder-ſtroke the intelligence that her riches were a dream, and that her huſbaud is a bankrupt.

I am told that commerce was never ſo flouriſhing in France as it has been for a year paſt, not only in the capital, but throughout the whole kingdom. The advantages which ſome have been enabled to gain from the paper money has led them to extraordinary enterpriſe, and the loſs which others have ſuſtained has produced extraordinary induſtry and activity. Commerce has benefited in both caſes. If the gold of France has vaniſhed with the nobleſſe, it is not of gold only that that claſs of perſons have diſburthened their

their country. They have alſo carried away with them that immenſe load of prejudices which has ſo long oppreſſed this nation, and which, by connecting degradation and contempt with commerce, deprived the country of the beſt uſe and improvement of its riches. If the French money has "made unto itſelf wings, and fled away," ſo alſo has the corvée, the gabelle, the arbitrary impoſitions, the ſeignorial rights, the enormous taxes which the poor paid to the rich, and which produced famine, where nature had ſcattered plenty; while they have left behind them the bleſſings of liberty, equal taxation, mild laws, trial by jury, the ſpirit of commerce. Paper money, when the criſis of the revolution is paſt, will, by a proceſs only known to free ſtates, be transformed into pure gold.

I have been at la Maiſon de Ville, in which houſe died Francis the Second, the huſband of Mary Queen of Scots. He came to Orléans with Mary, to meet the States General: was ſuddenly taken ill while he was at maſs, and died immediately.

The name of Mary Stuart is placed in the liſt of French female poets. Unfortunate Mary! When ſhe wrote her poetic farewell to this country,

"Adieu, plaiſant pays de France, &c."

ſhe ſeems to have felt a ſad preſage of her future calamities; thoſe calamities which make me forget every weakneſs of Mary, and every great quality of Elizabeth; qualities over which the fate of Mary has ſurely caſt an everlaſting ſhade.

At

At the Maiſon de Ville we ſaw a picture of Jeanne d'Arc, painted two hundred years ago. The countenance is uncommonly beautiful. It ſeems that nature, while ſhe beſtowed on the Maid of Orléans the heroic qualities of the other ſex, did not deny her the ſoft attractions of her own.

There is alſo at the Maiſon de Ville the picture of Doctor Petit, who is a native of this place, and has acquired a very high reputation, and an ample fortune as a phyſician at Paris. He has lately built a handſome houſe at Orléans, for the purpoſe of furniſhing advice and medicines gratis to the poor; and, with additional benevolence, to defend their little property from injuſtice, he has appointed lawyers who have a ſalary allowed them for pleading the cauſe of the indigent.

This public benefactor to his native city is the ſon of a taylor; and, in order to ſhew that he was ſuperior to the prejudices which ſo long enſlaved his country, he appointed the oldeſt taylor at Orlèans in indigent circumſtances to take care of this new inſtitution.

Doctor Petit I ſuppoſe felt, that having arrived at eminence by a path of all others the moſt honourable, that of diſtinguiſhed talents, he might be allowed to recollect, without bluſhing, the *roture* of his birth. Perhaps he thinks on this ſubject as Boileau did when he wrote—

——" Fuſſiez vous iſſus d'Hercule en droite ligne,
" Si vous ne faites voir qu'une baſſeſſe indigne,
" Ce long amas d'aïeux que vous diffamez tous,
" Sont autant de témoins qui parlent contre vous."

The

The late king of Pruſſia was told by one of his courtiers, that two ladies of high rank had a diſpute about precedency, which was become ſo ſerious that it was neceſſary for his majeſty to interpoſe his authority in deciding the queſtion. * "Eh bien!" ſaid Frederic, qu'on donne le pas à la plus folle."

LETTER XXXVII.

THERE is an univerſity at Orléans, founded by Philippe le Bel, in 1312. If one can forgive a tyrant, who purſued his own aggrandizement, ſometimes by the moſt perfidious policy, ſometimes by the moſt cruel oppreſſions, and who firſt changed offences againſt the king, which until his reign were only conſidered as crimes of felony, into crimes of high treaſon, it muſt be in conſideration of his having, in that barbarous age, done ſomething for the cauſe of literature. In this inſtance it appears that he did not reaſon with his uſual ſubtilty; ſince the progreſs of literature is very unfavourable to the intereſts of tyranny. What example ſo memorable, and ſo recent, of this truth, as the event of the French revolution? that glorious event which will probably in its conſequences change the face of this earth, and will be marked in the

* Well—give the precedency to the greateſt fool.

page

page of hiſtory as that luminous point of human annals, from which a better order of things is ſeen to ariſe: and this event has ſurely been the work of literature, of philoſophy, of the enlarging views of mankind. Liberty ſprings as naturally from knowledge, as light from the ſun; and the liberty which the French have acquired, and are determined to maintain, appears to be the deliberate, the noble, the auguſt choice of reaſon. It has no reſemblance to thoſe fiery meteors which ſometimes throw a tranſitory flaſh acroſs that darkneſs which they have not ſufficient power to diſpel: it is the ſublime effect of truth viſiting the land, like the day-ſpring from on high, and, with a ſimilar kind of influence over the moral world, warming the heart, in proportion as it enlightens the underſtanding.

The French, in forming their new conſtitution, have made an experiment in politics, and why ſhould they be cenſured for ſo doing? While philoſophy teaches the general utility of experimental ſcience, who will be bold enough to aſſert, that the ſcience of government alone has attained perfection, and is incapable of improvement? Who will ſay to the human underſtanding, on this one point only, thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther? If the progreſſion of reaſon in the art of government is forbidden, how miſerable are the proſpects of the human race! for ſmall indeed is the portion of political happineſs hitherto obtained by mankind.

But why do I attempt to juſtify the conduct of the French, when you know we have all heard that they have been guilty of the moſt fatal

fatal errors? They have ſhewn ſome diſpoſition to reform the papal hierarchy, and to ſeparate the artificial ſplendour of church eſtabliſhments from the pure beams of that light which cometh from above. They have invaded the grand monuments of the dead, and thrown open the melancholy tombs of the living. They have led beauty from the ſolitary cell, where its charms might have bloomed in ſecurity, and have expoſed thoſe dangerous attractions to the love and admiration of ſociety. They have drawn forth coins and medals, paintings and ſtatues, from thoſe venerable repoſitories where they had long lain buried with their paſt poſſeſſors. Their ſacrilegious hands have diſturbed the learned duſt of libraries ſtored with theological controverſies, and which diſplayed perhaps the weakneſs, as well as the ſtrength of the human mind: and, inſtead of employing the maſon, and the carpenter, in repairing the ravages of time on Gothic edifices, they have erected obeliſks to a pagan divinity, not to be found in the monkiſh calendar, and degraded at Rome ever ſince the days of the ancient republic. But let us turn from the enumeration of their tranſgreſſions againſt that code of reſpectable prejudices, ſtamped with the authority of paſt ages, and which in the opinion of ſome people ought to be deemed no leſs irreverſible than the decrees of the Medes and Perſians.

I ſhall finiſh my letter with the remark of a lady formerly noble, with whom I was lately in company. Some perſon happened to mention the

the philoſophers of France; * "Ah!" ſaid ſhe, with great warmth, "n'en parlez plus de ces gueux de philoſophes; ce ſont eux qui ont cauſé tous nos malheurs avec leurs écrits impertinens.

LETTER XXXVIII.

WE left Orléans the beginning of December, and are come to paſs the winter at Paris. Such of our acquaintances as are ariſtocrates tell us how much we ought to lament the evil deſtiny which has led us to Paris at preſent; that the town has loſt all its former éclat; that all the good company are at Coblentz; that the ſplendid equipages are laid aſide; that the public walks, where formerly none but perſons comme il faut were ſuffered to enter, are now filled with people whom nobody knows; and that, upon the whole, we may conſider ourſelves as moſt unfortunate travellers, who have come to ſee Paris at a time when there is nothing to be ſeen.

Notwithſtanding this obliging pity of ſome of my acquaintances, I am rather diſpoſed to con-

* Ah! do not talk any more of thoſe wretches of philoſophers; it is they who have occaſioned all our misfortunes by their impertinent writings.

gratulate

gratulate myſelf that I have miſſed the fine equipages, the laced liveries, and the good company at Coblentz; while I have an opportunity of obſerving the effects of a revolution, ſo noble in its deſign, ſo aſtoniſhing in the ſudden change produced in the ſentiments of a whole nation, riſing from the ſervility of abject ſervitude, to ſuch an exalted ſpirit of freedom, that the contemplation inſpires unwearied admiration and wonder.

I believe that the former magnificence of Paris, when its public places and public walks were crowded with perſons diſtinguiſhed by ſtars and ribbons, would have conveyed ſenſations very different, and far leſs delightful to my heart than thoſe which I have felt amidſt rejoicing multitudes, who had no other claim to diſtinction than virtue and patriotiſm, and no other decoration than the national cockade.

I have ſometimes recollected, on thoſe occaſions, the fine lines of Addiſon.

"Oh, Liberty, thou goddeſs heav'nly bright,
"Profuſe of bliſs, and pregnant with delight!
"Eternal pleaſures in thy preſence reign,
"And ſmiling Plenty leads thy wanton train;
"Eas'd of her load, Subjection grows more light,
"And Poverty looks cheerful in thy ſight;
"Thou mak'ſt the gloomy face of nature gay,
"Giv'ſt beauty to the ſun, and pleaſure to the day."

I never witneſs theſe ſcenes of general felicity without indulging the hope that a period is approaching more favourable than any former period, to the general happineſs of the human race: when the crooked ſubtleneſs of politics and the open violations of juſtice will alike

paſs away, and what has hitherto been conſidered as the fond ſpeculation of the philoſophers, the golden dream of the moraliſt, will become hiſtorical fact; when we ſhall no longer trace in the annals of hiſtory a ſanguinary liſt of crimes; when ambition, deprived of all power of doing evil, will only be left the ability to do good, and be forbidden any longer to cover the earth with deſolation; and when no path to glory will be left, but from the cultivation of human happineſs.

Do not imagine, however, that the emigrants have left nothing behind them but public ſpirit and public virtue; and that all ſplendour, taſte, and gaiety have fled with them to Coblentz. There are at preſent no leſs than twenty theatres at Paris, which are well filled every night; and at moſt of which you ſee charming acting. The grace, the ſprightlineſs, the naïveté, the eaſy natural movements of their comic actors far ſurpaſs any thing our London theatres can boaſt. Let us reſign to the French the palm of comedy, ſince the laurels of tragedy are all our own.—There is but one Siddons, one tranſcendent genius, who has every paſſion of the human heart at her command, and the ſublime graces of whoſe performance it is impoſſible not to feel, but no leſs impoſſible to deſcribe.

" Geſture, that marks with force, and feeling fraught,
" A ſcene in ſilence, and a will in thought;
" All periſhable, like th' electric fire,
" But ſtrike the eye, and as they ſtrike expire;
" Incenſe too pure a bodied frame to bear,
" Its fragrance charms the ſenſe, and melts in air."

Mademoiſelle

Mademoiſelle Clairon, the celebrated French tragic actreſs, not contented with the fame ſhe had acquired, once attempted, contrary to the advice of her friends, to act the part of Merope, in Voltaire's tragedy; a part which Madame Duſmenil, the rival of Mademoiſelle Clairon, had acted with extraordinary ſucceſs. A friend of Mademoiſelle Clairon's, who ſupped with her after the performance, ſaid to her, "You have very fine tragic powers, but you muſt abſolutely renounce the part of Merope; for there Madame Duſmenil is far ſuperior to you." * "Ah oui!" ſaid Mademoiſelle Clairon, heaving a deep ſigh, "la miſérable!——elle a eu un enfant!

Is it a proof of the ſuperior refinement of the French, that they are fonder of theatrical amuſements than the Engliſh? Or does it ariſe from that love of gaiety and pleaſure, which is ſo much more prevalent in the French than the Engliſh character? A London tradeſman, when the buſineſs of the day is over, ſits down contentedly with his wife and children, and reads the newſpaper. But a bourgeois at Paris uſually concludes the day at one of the ſpectacles, and this without injuring his circumſtances: as a taſte for thoſe amuſements being univerſal at Paris, there are ſpectacles adapted to every purſe, and pleaſure may be had at a very cheap rate.

There are coffee-houſes on the Boulevards, where the people, while they drink their wine, lemonade, or orgeat, are entertained with a play

* Ah, yes! the wretch—ſhe has had a child!

gratis. Women, as well as men, are admitted to theſe coffee-houſes; for the Engliſh idea of finding eaſe, comfort, or feſtivity, in ſocieties where women are excluded, never enters into the imagination of a Frenchman.

Not that the ſame gallantry, the ſame conſtant attention to women now prevails which exiſted before the revolution.—Like Moliere's Doctor, "on a changé tout cela." The men, engroſſed by political concerns which involve the fate of their country, and on which their own lives and fortunes depend, have no longer leiſure or inclination to devote as much time as they did formerly to the women; and I think the French ladies ſtand a fair chance of being ſoon almoſt as much neglected as the Engliſh. Not only the age of chivalry, but the age of petits maîtres is paſt.

The greateſt ſimplicity in dreſs is obſerved, and is ſometimes carried even to negligence. Every man ſeems at pains to ſhew that he has waſted as few moments as it was poſſible at his toilette, and that his mind is bent on higher cares than the embelliſhment of his perſon. I am told that this revolution in dreſs and manners, this ſubverſion of the ancient laws of etiquette, has excited ſuch a degree of ſurpriſe and wonder in the king's attendants at the Tuilleries, that, notwithſtanding this is the fourth year of French liberty, thoſe gentlemen have not yet got the better of their aſtoniſhment. Nothing, it is ſaid, can exceed the minute curioſity, and the expreſſive looks, ſhrugs, and geſtures, with which they examine the dreſs of the members of the National Aſſembly, when ſent on deputations

to

to the king. It is known that theſe gentlemen in waiting, having no idea of dignity, unaccoutred with a ſword and bag, were diſpoſed to treat the deputations from the National Aſſembly with contempt, till Mirabeau took the trouble to give them a leſſon on that ſubject.

He was ſent at the head of a deputation of the National Aſſembly to the king. The attendants, inſtead of going to inform his majeſty, that they deſired an audience, kept them waiting in the antichamber. Mirabeau, however, did not wait long. He roſe from his ſeat, and with that commanding aſpect and emphatic tone which belonged to him, walking up to a ci-devant duke, he ſaid, * "Monſieur, je vous *ordonne* d'aller dire au Roi que les repréſentans de la nation Françaiſe ſont ici." He was obeyed without one moment's heſitation.

But to return to the theatres. The little comic pieces which are acted at the petits ſpectacles at Paris are far ſuperior to our London after-pieces, which in general are full of coarſe, broad humour, much more calculated to excite diſguſt than laughter.

Even Harlequin, at Paris, inſtead of confining himſelf, as he does at London, to manual wit, and feats of activity, aſſumes a character of naïveté diverting enough. In this ſtyle is the account he gives to a friend of his having fallen in love: † "Et même," adds he, "je ſuis

* Sir, I *order* you to go and inform the king, that the repreſentatives of the French nation are here.

† I am even half married.—But how?—Why I am ready, and there is nothing wanting but the conſent of the young lady.

moitié

moitié marié." "Mais comment?" replies his friend.

"Ce que je le veux bien," ſays Harlequin, "et il ne manque que la conſentement de la demoiſelle."

The opera at Paris infinitely ſurpaſſes, in the ſplendour of its decorations, the illuſion of the machinery, and the charm of the dancing, the opera at London. But you know I am no enthuſiaſtic admirer of this faſhionable amuſement. I always find at an opera ſuch an air of burleſque, ſomething ſo artificial, nature and ſimplicity ſo completely baniſhed, that, notwithſtanding I love muſic paſſionately, I cannot help ſometimes feeling that the muſic at an opera "plays round the head, but comes not to the heart." And I am inclined to think with Lord Cheſterfield, that, in order to be pleaſed with that entertainment, you ought to leave your underſtanding with your half-guinea at the door.

LETTER XXXIX.

WE have been to ſee the magnificent Palais de Bourbon. This immenſe pile of building, with its numerous and ſpacious courts, now deſerted, ſolitary, and ſilent, affords ample room for moralizing. The petit Palais in which the Prince de Condé uſually lived, and where he frequently

quently entertained ſelect parties of his friends, is fitted up with a degree of beauty, taſte, and elegance, of which you can form no idea from any royal dwelling you have ſeen in England.

The Abbé de Mably, however, ſeems of opinion that, while our cottages are ſnug, warm, and comfortable, we have no reaſon to bluſh that the French bear away the palm from us in point of palaces. I have juſt read the Abbé de Mably's book, entitled, "Des Droites et des Devoirs du Citoyen," a work written ſeveral years ago, and in which the progreſs of the public mind in France, and the ſteps which led to the French revolution, are traced with ſo much ſimplicity, clearneſs, energy, and truth, that it ſeems rather the hiſtory of what has paſſed, than a prophecy of what was then to come.

When the Baſtille was taken, this book, together with a large edition of another work of the Abbé de Mably's, entitled, "Des Obſervations ſur l'Hiſtoire de France," were found in an apartment appropriated to the purpoſe of containing ſuch books as were judged improper for the eye of the public; and it is certain that the writings of the Abbé de Mably are ſufficiently philoſophical to have deſerved, under the reign of deſpotiſm, being made priſoners of ſtate.

We have alſo been to viſit Rincy and Mouceaux, two houſes belonging to the Duke of Orléans. Mouceaux is the moſt ſingular and enchanting ſpot I ever ſaw. You are led through long magnificent galleries, furniſhed with the moſt happy union of ſimplicity and elegance, and lighted

lighted by a thouſand lamps to a hot-houſe formed into ſerpentine walks, where, in the middle of winter, and at a time when the ground was covered with ſnow, an infinite variety of flowers diffuſed the moſt delicious fragrance. The air was of the temperature of ſpring, a caſcade falls over rocks with the moſt ſoothing murmurs, and this delightful ſpot leads to the dining apartment, from which you enjoy the beauties and fragrance of this elyſian walk, where the charms of nature and the embelliſhments of art are blended together in a manner which I imagined was only to be found in the palaces of ſylphs and fairies; perſonages, who, you know, are ſuppoſed to have a great deal more facility in raiſing ſplendid palaces than we mere mortals.

Rincy is a noble manſion, where M. d'Orléans, who has lived much in England, has united with the taſte and grandeur of a French palace, the comforts and accommodations of an Engliſh houſe.

The grounds of Rincy are laid out in the Engliſh taſte, are very beautiful, and of conſiderable extent. We dined with an Engliſh gentleman in the ſervice of Monſ. d'Orléans, and who lives in a charming houſe in his park.

In the morning we hunted a boar. This was the firſt time in my life I had ever been at a chace, and I find it an amuſement ſo little ſuited to my taſte, that I ſhall certainly never try it again. We rode in phaetons up and down the alleys of the woods, in ſearch of this wretched animal, who at laſt yielded himſelf up to the dogs, and had his life ſpared till another day. I believe

lieve a French hunt is as little ſuited to the taſte of an Engliſh fox-hunter, as it is to mine, but for a very different reaſon: here are neither incloſures to paſs, nor ſix-barred gates to leap; there is neither danger to encounter, nor glory to be gained; and too ſmall a chance of a broken neck to intereſt the paſſions of an Engliſh 'ſquire.

Since the revolution, ſuch quantities of game have been deſtroyed, that this Engliſh gentleman has thought proper to preſerve a number of the wild inhabitants of the foreſts from the general ſlaughter, by confining them in ſeparate paddocks, where boars, hares, &c. are regularly fed: but I do not believe their good fare reconciles them to the loſs of their liberty. I have no doubt they would prefer jour maigre, together with the unconfined range of the woods, to any fête within the paddock.

The Engliſh gentleman with whom we dined at Rincy, ſhewed me a little engraving of the deſcent of Meſſrs. Charles and Robert from their balloon. Theſe aërial adventurers were followed on horſeback by Monſ. d'Orléans, and a great number of perſons, among whom was this Engliſhman.

The balloon deſcended after a courſe of thirty miles; and the Engliſhman, getting the ſtart of the other horſemen, ſeized a cord of the balloon as it deſcended, and then ſpringing to embrace Monſ. Charles, reminded him, that he was the firſt to meet him. But being obliged to expreſs this ſentiment in French, he could find in the agitation of the moment no other words than,

* "Moi Charles premier." The French company were amuſed with the expreſſion, and ſoon after an engraving appeared of the deſcent of the balloon, the train of gentlemen on horſeback, the Engliſhman holding the cord, and theſe words below the print, "Moi Charles premier."

While the French princes are employing their revenues in training ſoldiers for the purpoſe of deluging their native country with blood, Monſ. d'Orléans is ſpending a conſiderable part of his revenne in paying workmen who are making improvements at Rincy. Monſ. d'Orléans has many enemies, who tell you that his patriotiſm is all affectation. However, ſince it has been uniform and conſtant, from the firſt period of the revolution, I know not on what ground this conjecture is founded: but this at leaſt is certain, that it would ſave this nation many millions, and too probably a great profuſion of blood, if the other French princes had diſtinguiſhed themſelves by the ſame kind of affectation.

With regard to the family of Monſ. d'Orléans, whom, in conſequence of my acquaintance with Madame de Sillery, I have the honour of knowing a little, I am firmly perſuaded from my own obſervations, that their patriotiſm is pure, warm, and diſintereſted. They are too amiable for diſguiſe, and the genuine feelings of their minds are eaſily diſcerned. "I am accuſed," ſays Madame de Sillery, in her laſt intereſting publication, "of having taught the princes under my care to love the revolution: whereas

* I am Charles the firſt.

their

their love of the revolution is but the natural, the neceſſary effect of thoſe principles which I had long ago inculcated in their minds."

To young perſons who had been inſtructed that the chief privilege ariſing from their high rank, was that of affording them opportunities of more extenſive benevolence; who had learned "the luxury of doing good," and imbibed the principles of general philanthropy towards the human race—to ſuch young perſons it was an eaſy taſk to make ſome ſacrifices to the happineſs of millions, and to love the revolution of their country.

LETTER XL.

I WENT on Chriſtmas-day to hear high maſs at the magnificent church of Notre Dame, where the colours are now diſplayed which uſed to float on the towers of the Baſtille, before that gloomy fortreſs was taken.

Maſs was performed by the archbiſhop of Paris, with great ſolemnity and devotion. Some parts of the muſic were fine, and I felt my mind raiſed and affected by it.

I often recollected, in the courſe of the day, with a tender and melancholy emotion, my diſtance from England, where that day is paſſed in a manner far more intereſting than in France.

With

With us, you know, it is ſpent in the boſom of your family, or conſecrated to the friends and connections you love moſt, while formal viſitors are excluded. This is not the caſe in France: the theatres are crowded with company, and the day paſſes in the uſual amuſements.

The laſt evening of the old year we went, about eight o'clock, to the Palais Royal, where the walks were filled with people, and moſt of the ſhops illuminated, particularly the confectioners, which in every part of Paris are ſplendidly lighted up on this evening, and make a more agreeable appearance than our paſtry-cooks ſhops on Twelfth-night in London; where the ſight of ſo much plum-cake as is then diſplayed becomes rather oppreſſive after ten years of age. The confectioners ſhops here are filled with ornamented glaſs boxes for ſweetmeats, and a variety of pretty trinkets, which people buy, and preſent to their friends at this ſeaſon.

A gentleman who called here this morning, told me an anecdote, which I ſhall relate to you. —A friend of his, formerly one of the garde du corps, and who very narrowly eſcaped from the fury of the people on the 6th of October, 1789, came a few days ago to Paris, and immediately ſent for a hair-dreſſer. The officer, while he was dreſſing, told the man, that he thought he remembered his face. "Yes, ſir," ſaid the hair-dreſſer; "and I recollect you perfectly—you were in the garde du corps; I ſaw you on the ſixth of October." * "Ma foi," ſaid

* Faith, I eſcaped very narrowly; I was very near being hanged.—Yes indeed, ſir, and I held the cord.

[the

the officer, "j'ai échappé bel; j'étais bien près d'être pendu." "Oui vraiment, monſieur," replied the hair-dreſſer, "et moi j'ai tenu la corde."

I obſerve with pleaſure a proof which the Pariſians give of that general veneration for genius, which prevails in this city, by calling ſeveral of the ſtreets of Paris after the names of celebrated men. Here is the quay of Voltaire, the ſtreet of Jean Jaques Rouſſeau, the ſtreet of Mirabeau, and, ſince the death of the Abbé Cerutti, a man of letters, and a patriot, the people have made the ci-devant ſtreet of Artois drop its ariſtocratical pretenſions, and aſſume the name of Cerutti.

Why is no ſtreet, no ſquare, in London named after Pope, Milton, or, to riſe to the higheſt climax of human genius, after Shakſpeare? We ſeem to have a ſtrange dread in England of indulging any kind of enthuſiaſm, however laudable. We are very apt to wrap up our feelings in the unrelenting ſeverity of wiſdom on occaſions when it would be far more amiable to give way to the impulſe of the heart. You will ſee Frenchmen bathed in tears at a tragedy. An Engliſhman has quite as much ſenſibility to a generous or tender ſentiment; but he thinks it would be unmanly to weep; and, though perhaps half choaked with emotion, he ſcorns to be overcome, contrives to gain the victory over his feelings, and throws into his countenance as much apathy as he can well wiſh.

We have alſo ſuch a profound dread of ridicule in England; we are ſo afraid of one another,

ther, that, inſtead of going into company with the hope of pleaſing, we only entertain the humble deſire of eſcaping cenſure. A French ſociety, with a happy mixture of enthuſiaſm and nonchalance, ventures on a thouſand traits of ſentiment, and ſprightly ſallies, which make the hours paſs away agreeably; but which an Engliſh company would not hazard for the world; but

——"do a willful ſtillneſs entertain,
With purpoſe to be dreſs'd in an opinion
Of wiſdom, gravity, profound conceit;
——I do know of thoſe,
That therefore only are reputed wiſe,
For ſaying nothing."——

And yet I can find no other reaſon for the Engliſh going into company with their minds in complete armour, and their underſtandings always in a poſture of defence, except, that an Engliſhman cannot bear to be laughed at, and that a Frenchman can; for I do not believe there is more good nature in France than in England. Writing upon this ſubject recals powerfully to my heart the idea of thoſe friends with whom I paſſed moſt of my time in London; of that ſociety which abſence can only ſerve to endear, by convincing me that its loſs is irreparable.

I have heard a gentleman allege, that French and Engliſh converſation amounted to the ſame thing; for, ſaid he, *"Les Anglais ne diſent *rien*, et les Français diſent des *riens*."

* The Engliſh ſay *nothing*, and the French ſay *nothings*.

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There are no talents which I feel more diſpoſed to envy than thoſe of wit and eloquence in converſation; than the power of giving it a freſh flow when it grows languid; when, to uſe the beautiful image of Mrs. Piozzi, "the little ſtream of prattle ceaſes to murmur for want of a few pebbles to break its courſe." Apropos of eloquence—One evening at Streatham Park, ſome perſon aſked Doctor Johnſon, how he would chooſe to diſtribute the great offices of ſtate which were at that time vacant, amongſt the literary ladies of his acquaintance. "Mrs. Carter," ſaid he, "ſhall be appointed Lord "High Chancellor of England." "And what place will you give to the lady of this houſe?" ſomebody enquired. "We will give *her*," anſwered Johnſon, "a ſeat in the Houſe of Com-"mons, and ſhe will riſe of herſelf."

LETTER XLI.

THERE were ſome commotions lately at Paris, on account of an attempt to monopolize ſugar, which was already ſold at an enormous price, and which the poor of Paris, who live as much upon coffee as the poor of London do upon tea, conſider as one of the neceſſaries of life. For three nights the guards were trebled, and the town was lighted up for greater ſecurity. In a few days the commotion was entirely appeaſed, which

which I own had never given me the ſmalleſt alarm: for I always conſider myſelf in perfect ſafety at Paris under the protection of the national guard, which the Pariſians call, with truth, la ſauve-garde de la ville. The national guards are ſo much reſpected by the people, that they find it eaſy to enforce obedience, and they generally make the wiſeſt and moſt temperate uſe of their power.

I have been ſeveral times at the National Aſſembly. The debates in this ſecond legiſlature are leſs intereſting than thoſe of the Conſtituent Aſſembly, where almoſt at every ſitting ſome pillar of the ancient ſyſtem was thrown down, and ſome part of the new fabric roſe majeſtically from its ruins. Neither does this aſſembly diſplay the ſame blaze of talents which aſtoniſhed and dazzled in the former. She can boaſt of no Mirabeau, no tranſcendent genius

> ——— "on the ample pinion,
> That the Theban eagle bear,
> Sailing with ſupreme dominion
> Thro' the azure depths of air—
> Yet will ſhe ſoar, and keep her equal way
> ——— how far above the great!"

And one may apply to the genius of this aſſembly what I lately read in a little collection of French letters, where the writer, ſpeaking of the talents for poetry which prevail ſo generally in the ſouthern provinces of France, the country of the Troubadours, ſays, "Nobody has immenſe riches of genius in this country; but eaſy, even affluent fortunes are very common; and the ſum of poetical wealth is upon the whole far more con-

conſiderable than if a great deal were accumulated upon one head."

There is a ſufficient ſtock of ability in the National Aſſembly, animated as it is by the moſt important and exalted objects. A member of the National Aſſembly knows that he is pleading not merely the cauſe of the people of France. He is ſpeaking at the tribune of Europe, and he is pleading the cauſe of all the people of the earth. For it is now too late for the lovers of arbitrary power to conſider the French revolution in the light in which they once affected to conſider it. The time long ago is paſt, for terming that event an affair of accident, and the triumph of the rabble, which is found to have originated in the unanimous will of a great and enlightened nation, and has taught mankind a leſſon, which perhaps the whole human race will be proud to learn.

I heard the decree paſſed in the National Aſſembly for confiſcating the eſtates of the emigrants. They, and their chiefs the French princes, will probably ſoon tire the ſhort-lived pity of foreign courts, and will be doomed to wander over Europe, as the adherents of the houſe of Stuart have done, poor, wretched, and abandoned. Yet how different the ſituation of the Scotch and French fugitives! How different the ſituation of the deſcendants of James the Second, and that of Lewis the Sixteenth! What are the misfortunes of Lewis the Sixteenth? He has been deprived of deſpotic power. What is his preſent ſituation? He is called by the conſent of a free people to the crown of the greateſt nation in Europe. The French emigrants are not, therefore, influenced by the ſame generous motives

motives which led the adherents of the houſe of Stuart to take up arms, which could be no other than a diſintereſted attachment to that family, in defence of which they riſked their lives and fortunes. The French emigrants, on the contrary, would deluge their native country with blood, ſooner than renounce titles that were vain, and privileges that were odious.

LETTER XLII.

I HAVE been at the Jacobins, that ſociety which has acted a part ſo diſtinguiſhed in the French revolution, and in which every political queſtion of importance is debated before it is brought forward in the National Aſſembly. The Jacobins have too much influence in the new ſyſtem of French politics not to have many enemies. By thoſe perſons every crime, every enormity is attributed to this ſociety; which, it is aſſerted, has not only the fate of France, but the fate of Europe in his hands. If the Emperor of Germany is hoſtile to the French nation, it is the fault of the Jacobins. Leopold felt the moſt tender and paternal intereſt in the proſperity of the new conſtitution: but he was forced to make a declaration of war againſt that formidable, that atrocious ſect. To the Jacobins is owing every outrage committed by popular fury, and every treaſonable deſign conceived by the ariſto-

ariſtocratic factions. The Jacobins are the contrivers of all diſorder, the levellers of all diſtinctions, and the enemies of all ſubordination. It is their intention to overturn the preſent ſyſtem of government, and divide the French empire into eighty-three republics, governed by Jacobins.

Such is the cry, not merely of thoſe who have the courage to profeſs themſelves of the ariſtocratic party, but alſo of thoſe, who, however they may regret the ſubverſion of the old government, have ſagacity enough to perceive that, like the age of chivalry, it is paſt for ever, and therefore prudently determine to attempt its reſtoration no more. The ancient ſyſtem of abuſes they find muſt be renounced, and therefore they limit their ambition to the conſervation of as many errors, as many prejudices as poſſible. Theſe perſons talk to you of their profound reſpect for the new conſtitution, which they accuſe the Jacobins of wiſhing to ſubvert. I believe, indeed, that if there are ſome points of the conſtitution which the Jacobins diſapprove, they are thoſe very points which theſe perſons would bind on their poſterity for ever. Even among the patriots there are many who think that, the conſtitution being now eſtabliſhed, the deliberations of the Jacobins are no longer neceſſary, and who alſo think that that ſociety leans too much towards republicaniſm.

There are in France ſeveral different ſects of patriots; but the two leading parties are thoſe who are reproachfully termed by each other, *enragés* and *modérés*; and the great features of difference between theſe parties ſeem to be that the enragés place the declaration of rights above the conſtitution, while the modérés place the conſti-

tution

tution above the declaration of rights. Each party is as dogmatical as the former doctors of the Sorbonne. But a Frenchman never diſputes with calmneſs on any ſubject: it were therefore unreaſonable to expect he ſhould throw aſide the natural impetuoſity of his character, on the very points moſt likely to call it forth. This accounts, in ſome meaſure, for the violent tumults which ſometimes ariſe in the National Aſſembly; while in our Houſe of Commons debates are carried on with the moſt perfect good order and tranquillity. Another reaſon, however, may be aſſigned for this, beſides the difference of national character. In the Houſe of Commons our great orators may be as eloquent as they will; they may do honour to our nation, and to the age in which they live, by the energy, the ſublimity of their talents; but every body knows that their eloquence does not influence even one ſolitary vote; and before a debate begins, all the world is well appriſed how the buſineſs will end.

This is not the caſe in the National Aſſembly. There, arguments and votes have ſtill a connection with each other; and therefore every point is diſcuſſed with vehemence.—But to return to the Jacobins.—If they have many enemies, the party of their friends is far more numerous. Thoſe perſons declare that they never enter the hall of the Jacobins without reſpect, becauſe they conſider it as the cradle and the ſanctuary of French liberty. They are convinced that thoſe watchful, vigilant, jealous, noiſy Jacobins are its beſt guardians; and that but for the extenſive influence which they have acquired, in con-

conſequence of their correſpondence with the other patriotic ſocieties, eſtabliſhed in every part of the kingdom, with whom they conſtantly maintain a chain of connection, the infant liberty of France would have been cruſhed in its birth by its numerous and formidable enemies. The friends of the Jacobins believe that they are very far from intending to overthrow the preſent ſyſtem, whatever ſpeculative opinions ſome of the members of that ſociety may have on the ſubject of government: but that, if the Jacobins ſhould find that corruption is ſuffered to taint the purity of the new conſtitution and impede its march—if it ſhould be found that the firſt National Aſſembly, after having formed that conſtitution upon the great and everlaſting baſis of the rights of man, and of which the Abbé Sieyes has the glory of having laid the corner-ſtone in drawing up the declaration of thoſe rights—if it ſhould be found that that aſſembly, after ſuſtaining a long and laborious ſtruggle, at length wearied of the conflict, ſhould ſuffer the beautiful work they had created to be deformed in the reviſion of it—if it ſhould be found that the conſtitution, in its preſent ſtate, is like an ill-conſtructed carriage, and that it is in the power of the drivers to put ſome ſecret clogs upon the wheels, and prevent its going forward, while the patriots in vain laſh up the horſes—then, it is ſaid, the Jacobins will warn the people of the threatened danger, with that bold, that ardent eloquence which belongs to the apoſtles of liberty.

I was at the Jacobins when the Engliſh, French, and American colours, faſtened together

gether with bands of laurel and national ribbons, were placed in the hall. As ſoon as the colours appeared, the hall reſounded with acclamations of more than two thouſand perſons who were preſent, and who immediately roſe from their ſeats; the men waved their hats in the air, and from every quarter were re-echoed the cries of *" Vive la liberté — Vive l'Angleterre — Vive la France — Vivent les nations libres!" At the ſight of thoſe banners, ſo often the ſymbols of war, of deſolation, of horror, now become the pledges of peace, of good will, of union between the nations, every heart ſeemed animated with a ſacred enthuſiaſm, every boſom throbbed with ſympathy, and every eye was melted with tears. The colours were fixed in the hall, and it was propoſed by ſome of the members, and ordered by the ſociety, that buſts of Price, Franklin, Algernon Sidney, Jean Jaques Rouſſeau, and the Abbé de Mably, ſhould be placed beneath the banners of the three nations.

The names of Milton, of Locke, and of Hambden, re-echoed through the hall, where it was propoſed that their buſts ſhould alſo in a ſhort time be placed. I heard with exultation the well-known names of theſe celebrated perſons, and recollected with pride that I had the honour of belonging to the ſame country. Surely that nation which produced the writings of Milton and of Locke, which gave birth to Sidney and Hambden, in ages when the reſt

* Long live liberty—Long live England—Long live France — Long live the nations that are free!

of

of Europe were ſlaves, has a claim to the everlaſting gratitude and admiration of mankind.

In this enlightened period of the world more perfect ſyſtems of legiſlation may perhaps be formed than England can boaſt. *Her* Magna Charta was obtained not in the illumination of the eighteenth, but in the Gothic darkneſs of the twelfth ceutnry. *She* can never be deprived of the moſt glorious pre-eminence among the children of freedom; *ſhe*, who cheriſhed in her boſom the noble ſentiments of liberty, when the nations around her were ſunk in the moſt abject ſervitude. If thoſe nations now find the path of freedom, it is by purſuing the track which England firſt explored.

The example of the revolution in America is ſuppoſed to have had conſiderable influence on the French nation: and from whom did the Americans imbibe their love of freedom? They loved it becauſe they were of Engliſh race, and had ſtudied the writings of Engliſh philoſophers, and the examples of Engliſh patriots.

May England rectify the abuſes and corruptions which have crept into her government by wiſe and temperate reformation—may ſhe avoid thoſe ſtorms and convulſions which are only neceſſary to purfy the moral, as well as the phyſical world, from any mighty and fatal contagion. While France has been obliged to correct *her* government by holding in one hand her philoſophic declaration of rights, and graſping her unſheathed ſword in the other—may England effect the ſame auguſt purpoſe with no other arms than thoſe of reaſon—may ſhe,

without interrupting her national proſperity, employ the moſt effectual means of ſecuring its continuance — may ſhe direct that full tide of wealth which rolls through the land, to viſit it in more equal ſtreams; and may there be "no leading into captivity, and no complaining in her ſtreets!"

LETTER XLIII.

THE firſt National Aſſembly, amidſt the greatneſs and extent of its labours, was obliged to leave to a ſucceeding aſſembly the taſk of inſtituting a plan of public education; a taſk which will ſoon occupy the preſent legiſlature, and will alone ſerve to immortalize it, if well performed.

It is ſaid, that Monſieur Condorcet, a member of the preſent National Aſſembly, is at preſent employed on this object; and there can be no doubt that he will execute the work he has undertaken with that philoſophical ſpirit, and that extenſive knowledge, which he poſſeſſes in ſo conſpicuous and eminent a degree.

How many ſoothing, how many comprehenſive and ſublime ideas does this plan of public education include! There is ſomething infinitey agreeable and delightful to the imagination in the anticipation of that progreſs which the riſing

riſing generation in this country may make in reaſon, in philoſophy, in virtue, and in happineſs; and the improvement of the riſing generation cannot but be highly intereſting to the friends of the French revolution, ſince it ſeems peculiarly for them that that revolution has been made. They will beſt enjoy the benefits reſulting from it. The preſent patriots of France may be ſaid figuratively, as well as literally, to be placed in a field of battle: they have long-rooted prejudices to conquer; they have ancient errors to ſubdue; which perhaps are more difficult to be vanquiſhed than the combined forces of Germany and of Pruſſia. In the auguſt career of liberty, theſe patriots are encompaſſed with dangers, and beſet with ſnares; and if they are now enabled to keep the field againſt thoſe who were formerly their tyrants, it is by the determined, the unremitting conteſt they maintain with vice, ve ıality, and corruption. But through the clouds and ſtorms which now obſcure the French horizon, it is eaſy to diſcern the clear, the bright perſpective which unfolds itſelf to the riſing race. We ſee that the bleſſings of enlightened freedom await them, and we rejoice that a ſuitable education will qualify them to enjoy their diſtinguiſhed lot; that they will be made worthy of their high deſtiny, and fit guardians of that better order of things which they wlll be called upon to maintain.

Mirabeau had drawn out a plan of public inſtruction, which he meant to preſent to the National Aſſembly; and he intended, when this queſtion was diſcuſſed, to propoſe at the ſame time the abolition of the literary academies, or

rather corporations of Paris, which he conſidered as incompatible with the ſpirit of a free conſtitution, and as injuring inſtead of ſerving the cauſe of letters.

Monſ. Chamfort, a member of the French academy, had, at Mirabeau's deſire, written a diſcourſe on the ſubject of that academy, which the death of Mirabeau prevented his reading at the tribune of the National Aſſembly. It is a fact well known in France, that Mirabeau eagerly ſought and accepted the aſſiſtance of ſuch men as he thought were capable of furniſhing him with ideas worthy of his own high reputation.—There was certainly a want of delicacy in thus wearing, without ſcruple, as he frequently did, thoſe laurels which were the right of another. But ſince he could reconcile himſelf to borrowed applauſe, he was peculiarly fortunate in having Monſ. Chamfort for his friend, who, with a mind well qualified to lend ideas to Mirabeau, unites a degree of reſerve and delicacy, which led him to reſign with readineſs thoſe claims to fame which Mirabeau, without heſitation, made his own. Monſ. Chamfort is well known at Paris, not only as a man of the firſt literary talents, and as poſſeſſing the moſt brilliant powers of converſation, but is alſo diſtinguiſhed for having felt and profeſſed the moſt ardent love of liberty, many years before the revolution had brought principles of that kind into faſhion.—What has made this circumſtance well remembered, is, that the ſociety in which this gentleman conſtantly avowed theſe ſentiments, was that of the Prince of Condé; on whom it reflects ſome honour, that he had ſufficient taſte

to

to court Monſ. Chamfort's ſociety, and ſufficient underſtanding to pardon the independence of his ſpirit.

In the diſcourſe which Monſ. Chamfort gave to Mirabeau upon the French academy, he paints with admirable acuteneſs, with all the force of genius, and all the wit of irony, the littleneſs, the inutility, the abſurdities, and above all the abject ſpirit which has prevailed in that ſociety: but there is one paſſage in this diſcourſe upon "the prize of virtue," eſtabliſhed in the French academy, which is in my opinion a model of fine writing, and I cannot reſiſt tranſcribing part of it.

* "Et d'abord, laiſſant à part cette affiche, ce concours périodique, ce programme d'un prix

* And not to mention that public advertiſement, that periodical annunciation of a prize of virtue *for the following year*, I read the terms of the inſtitution, and I ſee this prize is deſtined for the virtues of ſuch as are of the *indigent claſs of citizens*. What! has then the claſs of the opulent yielded the palm of virtue to the poor? No aſſuredly. That claſs pretends alike with the other to the diſplay of virtue. But the rich will not accept the prize. No; the prize is gold, and the rich would conſider themſelves degraded by receiving it. I underſtand them; there is not enough; and they diſdain to take it. The rich leave it to the poor. Do you then mean to pay, or to honour virtue? You ſurely neither pretend nor hope ſhe can be paid. You mean then to honour her. It is well. Do not then begin by degrading her, in placing riches above indigent virtue. Oh, what a ſubverſion of every moral idea, ariſing from that exceſs of corruption which it is calculated to increaſe! Mark the abyſs from which we are delivered. Tell me in what corporation, in what ſociety a gentleman would have been admitted who had accepted the prize of virtue, beſtowed by a public aſſembly! There exiſted then amongſt us even a *roture* in virtue. Take back that gold which cannot recompenſe a noble action of the rich. Render to virtue ſufficient

prix de vertu *pour l'année prochaine*, je lis les termes de la fondation, et je vois ce prix deſtiné aux vertus des citoyens *dans la claſſe indigente*. Quoi donc? Qu'eſt-ce à dire? La claſſe opulente a-t-elle relégué la vertu dans la claſſe des pauvres? Non ſans doute. Elle prétend bien, comme l'autre, pouvoir faire éclater des vertus. Elle ne veut donc pas du prix? Non certes.—

ficient homage to believe that ſhe alone can alſo recompenſe the poor, who, with an opulent conſcience, can, as well as the rich, place a good action between Heaven and his own mind. Legiſlators, do not decree the divinity of gold, in giving it as a ſalary for thoſe ſublime cautions, thoſe noble ſacrifices which ſeem to place man in communion with his eternal Author. Your decree will be annulled—it is already annulled in the ſoul of the poor—yes, of the poor, in that moment when he ennobles himſelf by a generous action. Nothing is more general than the ſentiment which atteſts this truth. Ah, have you not ſeen in thoſe diſaſters, thoſe evils which claim immediate ſuccour—have you not ſeen the poor, when at the riſk of life by ſome great act of courage he has ſaved one of his fellow-creatures, I mean the rich, the opulent, the happy, for the poor conſiders ſuch as his fellow-creatures in the moment when they require his ſuccour—have you not ſeen that when, in the firſt effuſions of gratitude for his preſervation, the rich has preſented his benefactor with gold—have you never obſerved that indigent, that friendleſs, forlorn ſon of poverty draw back, and bluſh? An hour before he would have implored your charity. Whence then ariſes this generous emotion of the mind? It is that you profane his virtue, ungrateful as you are! You corrupt your gratitnde. He has performed a good action—he has enriched himſelf, and you treat him as if he were poor! Inſtead of the divine ſatisfaction of having ſatisfied the moſt noble propenſity of the ſoul, you ſubſtitute the idea of his material wants. You ſnatch him from heaven, where he felt that he had ſome intereſt, to earth, where he knows that he has none!

Oh, human nature, thus do they honour thee!—
When virtue lifts thee to thy moſt ſublime elevation, they bring thee gold, they offer thee an alms!

Ce

Ce prix eſt de l'or; le riche en l'acceptant ſe croirait avili. J'entends; il n'y en a point aſſez; il ne le prendrait pas. Le riche l'oſe dire, et pourquoi ne le prendrait-il pas? Le pauvre le prend bien! Payez-vous la vertu? ou bien, l'honorez-vous? Vous ne la payez pas; ce n'eſt ni votre prétention, ni votre eſpérance. Vous l'honorez donc! Eh bien! commencez par ne pas l'avilir en mettant la richeſſe au-deſſus de la vertu indigente. O renverſement de toutes les idées morales, né de l'excès de la corruption publique, et fait pour l'accroître encore! Meſurons de l'œil l'abyme dont nous ſortons: dans quel corps, dans quelle compagnie eût-il été admis, le ci-devant gentilhomme qui eût accepté le prix de vertu dans une aſſemblée publique? Il y avoit parmi nous la routure de la vertu! Retirez donc votre or, qui ne peut récompenſer une belle action du riche. Rendez à la vertu cet hommage de croire que le pauvre auſſi peut être payé par elle; qu'il a, comme le riche, une conſcience opulente et ſolvable; qu'enfin il peut, comme le riche, placer une bonne action entre le ciel et lui. Légiſlateurs, ne décrétez pas la divinité de l'or, en le donnant pour ſalaire à ces mouvemens ſublimes, à ces grands ſacrifices, qui ſemblent mettre l'homme en commerce avec ſon éternel Auteur. Il ſerait annullé votre décret, il l'eſt d'avance dans l'ame du pauvre—oui, du pauvre, au moment où il vient de s'honorer par un acte généreux. Il eſt commun, il eſt par-tout le ſentiment qui atteſte cette vérité. Eh! n'avez vous pas vu dans ces déſaſtres qui provoquent le ſecours général—n'avez-vous pas vu quelqu'un de ces pauvres, lorſqu'au riſque de ſes jours et par un grand

acte

acte de courage, il a ſauvé l'un de ſes ſemblables, je veux dire, le riche, l'opulent, l'heureux, car il les prend pour ſes ſemblables. dès qu'il faut les ſecourir; lorſqu'après le péril et dans le reſte des effuſions de ſa reconnaiſſance, le riche ſauvé préſente de l'or à ſon bienfaiteur, à cet indigent, à cet homme dénué; regardez celui-ci, comme il s'indigne, il recule, il s'étonne, il rougit— une heure auparavant il eût mendié. D'où lui vient ce noble mouvement? c'eſt que vous profanez ſon bienfait, ingrat que vous êtes! Vous corrompez votre reconnaiſſance. Il a fait du dien, il vient de s'enrichir, et vous le traitez en pauvre! Au plaiſir céleſte d'avoir ſatisfait le plus beau beſoin de ſon ame, vous ſubſtituez la penſée d'un beſoin matériel; vous le ramenez du ciel, où il eſt quelque choſe, ſur la terre, où il n'eſt rien. O nature humaine! voilà comme on t'honore! Quand la vertu t'élève à ta plus grande hauteur, c'eſt de l'or qu'on vient t'offrir, c'eſt l'aumône qu'on te préſente!"

You will be diſpoſed to believe, from the above ſpecimen, that in France talents and patriotiſm are, as I have often told you, in ſtrict alliance.

LETTER

LETTER XLIV.

THE Prince de Piemont converſing lately upon the commotions which agitate Europe at preſent, ended by ſaying, * "Enfin, il faut que ceux qui veulent régner ſe dépêchent." The minds of men, rouſed and animated by the moſt important and extraordinary movements, do, indeed, ſeem to loſe ſight a little of "that divinity that hedges in a king."

I am not, however, always occupied by theſe vaſt political diſcuſſions, but ſpend a part of every day at the Lycée, a charming inſtitution, where learning ſeems ſtripped of its thorns and decorated with flowers, and where the gay and ſocial Pariſians cultivate ſcience and the belles lettres, amidſt the pleaſures and attractions of ſociety; while in England, where the art of being happy is certainly far leſs underſtood than in France, when we wiſh to acquire knowledge, we ſhut ourſelves up for that purpoſe in ſober meditation, and ſerious ſolitude. Perhaps, indeed, the knowledge gained by ſolitary ſtudy may be the moſt profound; but the knowledge acquired in ſociety leaves on the mind the moſt agreeable impreſſion.

The Lycée was formed in 1785, under the auſpices of Monſieur the king's brother, and Monſieur d'Artois, and was ſoon reſorted to not

* In ſhort, thoſe who wiſh to reign muſt make haſte.

only

only by men of letters, but by the moſt faſhionable perſons of both ſexes. Lectures are given at the Lycée by the moſt celebrated profeſſors at Paris, on natural philoſophy, chemiſtry, natural hiſtory, botany, hiſtory, and belles lettres; and the Greek, Italian, French and Engliſh languages are taught.

The Lycée drooped a little at the period of the revolution. In the violent convulſion of that moment, literature and arts were forgotten. But the Lycée ſoon revived; and though its former patrons are now at Coblentz, preparing an attempt, of which the leſſons of hiſtory they received at the Lycée might have taught them the folly and impracticability, that of enſlaving a people who are determined to be free; this inſtitution is riſing every day into higher celebrity from the eminent abilities of ſome of the profeſſors. Of their knowledge in the different ſciences they teach, I, in my ignorance, am little qualified to judge. But I can feel the charms of eloquence, and therefore find that chemiſtry, when taught by Monſ. Fourcroy, is the moſt engaging, the moſt enchanting ſcience in the world.

Monſ. Garat, member of the firſt National Aſſembly, gives us lectures on Roman hiſtory, no leſs intereſting than philoſophical, and frequently makes ſuch ſublime applications to the revolution of France as call from my eyes the tears of delight and admiration.

Sometimes our ſtudies are accompanied by fine muſic; and ſometimes the Abbé de Lille, the firſt French poet, recites his harmonious verſes.

Upon

poetical language. Some of the moſt agreeable hours I have ſpent at Paris have been paſſed in the ſociety of the author of this work, Monſ. Bitaube, a Pruſſian gentleman, who to ſuperior talents and learning unites the moſt amiable manners. He has alſo publiſhed a French tranſlation of Homer, with which the late King of Pruſſia was ſo much pleaſed, that he uſed to ſay it had taught him to admire the old Grecian bard, for whom before he had felt little veneration. In general, the applauſe which a king beſtows on a literary performance, may be thought of leſs value in the republic of letters, than the approbation of ſome heads not encircled with a crown: but the honour ariſing from the praiſes of a poet and philoſopher like Frederic the Second, is entirely independent of his royal ſtation.

LETTER XLV.

YOU have heard no doubt that we have had a fête at Paris, on account of the arrival of the ſoldiers de Chateau-Vieux: but to give you an idea of all the diſturbance, animoſity, quarrels, and contention, which preceded this *civic* fête, would be ſomewhat difficult. For a fortnight before it took place the whole town of Paris was thrown into the moſt violent agitation. The approach,

approaching war ſeemed forgotten. Francis might threaten, and Pruſſia might arm; but all conſideration of foreign affairs was laid aſide, and the ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux ſolely occupied the public attention. This Swiſs regiment, called Chateau-Vieux, was one of thoſe regiments which were encamped in the Champ de Mars before the revolution, and which were deſtined to maſſacre the Pariſians, diſſolve the ſtates-general, and lay waſte the city of Paris. But the ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux diſdained to act the part which had been aſſigned them in this bloody tragedy: they refuſed to become the aſſaſſins of the Pariſians, and declared to their officers their reſolution to break their arms in pieces, ſooner than employ them againſt the citizens. That ſoldiers ſhould dare before they drew their ſwords to deliberate whether the cauſe was juſt,—that when the word of command for murder was given, they ſhould refuſe to obey, becauſe murder is a crime—was an example of morality, which, if it became contagious, would, it was immediately felt, prove abſolutely deſtructive to the good old cauſe of arbitrary power; and it was reſolved to puniſh the ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux for having dared to *reaſon*, when *fighting* was the only thing for which they had received orders.

The regiment of Chateau-Vieux was ſent to Nancy in that diviſion which Bouillé commanded, and there Bouillé, who had already formed his plan of treaſon, attempted to light up the flames of civil war. He led the national guards, collected in haſte from the neighbouring municipalities, againſt the citizens of Nancy. The

ſoldiers

Upon the whole, the pleaſures of the Lycée are perfectly congenial to my taſte; and it is to me by far the moſt agreeable of all the various reſources which this great capital affords. I regret we have no ſuch inſtitution in London. What a relief would ſome people find in being able to eſcape, for an hour, from thoſe everlaſting evenings which are devoted to the dull vacuity of faſhionable converſation, or the ſad repetitions of card aſſemblies, and to ſtore the famiſhed mind with a little ſtock of thought and ſentiment, in ſuch a ſociety as the Lycée!

I am ſurpriſed to meet there with ſo few of my countrymen. Such of them as come to Paris in order to acquire the French language, would find at the Lycée not only the advantages of inſtruction, but of converſation; ſince the gentlemen form a ſort of club every evening, when the journals of the day are read, and its politics diſcuſſed.

The Abbé Sicard has at different times explained to us, at the Lycée, the manner in which he inſtructs his deaf and dumb pupils, ſome of whom always accompany him. Nor can you imagine any thing more affecting than the ſight of theſe unhappy young perſons, condemned by nature to loſe all that gives life its deareſt value, the enjoyments of ſociety, and to find "reaſon at one entrance quite ſhut out." But the melancholy which theſe reflections inſpire is ſoothed, by obſerving that the pupils of the Abbé Sicard have not been left in this wretched condition. The Abbé ſhewed us with admirable ingenuity, and with that enthuſiaſm which it is ſo natural for a benevolent mind to feel in

the exerciſe of its powers, by what gradations he had led theſe children, whom he ſaid, when firſt put under his care, he conſidered in the light of young ſavages brought from a remote country, and entirely ignorant of his language, from the knowledge of ſenſible objects, to moral and intellectual ideas.

One of his pupils, a young man about eighteen years of age, who accompanied him, appears to poſſeſs conſiderable talents, and anſwered ſome abſtruſe queſtions which were put to him by ſome of the company, with wonderful acuteneſs. He is the eldeſt of a family of five children at Bourdeaux, who are all deaf and dumb. Some time ago it was propoſed to ſend for his ſiſter to Paris, and place her alſo under the Abbé Sicard's care. The young man, who poſſeſſes uncommon ſenſibility, was in tranſports of joy at the thoughts of ſeeing his ſiſter. In the fulneſs of his heart, he immediately wrote a long account of her talents and good qualities, and ended in theſe words: * "Et elle ne rit jamais ſans néceſſité." Is there not a great deal included in this original kind of eulogium?

I find little leiſure for reading amidſt the hurry of Paris; but I have contrived to ſnatch ſufficient time for the peruſal of a charming little book which was publiſhed ſome years ago at Paris, entitled Joſeph, written in imitation of the Death of Abel by Geſner. This ſtory of Joſeph is painted with the moſt touching ſimplicity, and embelliſhed with all the graces of

* And ſhe never laughs but from neceſſity.

poetical

in ſhort, every thing was aſſerted that paſſion and party-rage could ſuggeſt.

The citizens, however, had gone too far to recede: the fête took place, and was the more ſingular and intereſting from being ſtripped of much of its intended ſplendour. No perſon was ſuffered to carry arms, and the ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux, inſtead of mounting a triumphal car which had been prepared for them, were mixed undiſtinguiſhed with the crowd. The fête, however, notwithſtanding the gloomy augurs which had preceded it, paſſed without the ſmalleſt diſorder.

The people, who were aſſembled to the number of between three and four hundred thouſand, formed their own police; and, finding ſome difficulty at ſetting out in marſhalling the proceſſion, every one being ambitious to have a place near the triumphal car of liberty, a gardener picked a wheat ear, with which the people conſented to regulate the order of the march, and wherever the wheat-ear was carried, immediately ranged themſelves in good order.

Thus marſhalled by a wheat-ear, inſtead of being kept in their places as formerly by the point of bayonets, the people, whom their enemies had accuſed of the moſt dark and atrocious deſigns, advanced towards the Champ de Mars, indulging themſelves in all the enthuſiaſm of ſimple and affectionate joy. They danced, they ſung hymns to liberty, they filled the air with cries of, Vive la nation!

We ſaw the proceſſion from the apartments of Monſ. Deſormeaux, in the Palais de Bourbon.

bon. This gentleman, who is a man of letters, was many years librarian to the Prince de Condé; but, inſtead of following that Prince to Coblentz, he has choſen to ſhare the fortunes of his country. We have received from him all thoſe polite attentions for which the French have ſo long been diſtinguiſhed, and which I hope they will never loſe; for why, in acquiring the great, ſhould they renounce the amiable qualities?—But to return to the fête. The people do not always reaſon very logically; and therefore, inſtead of concluding, as they ought to have done, that ſince the ariſtocrates of the Palais de Bourbon were fled, thoſe who remained behind were probably good patriots, their concluſions took quite another turn. They could aſſociate no ideas of patriotiſm with the Palais de Bourbon, and accuſed us of ariſtocracy as they approached. But they did not remain long in this error. They ſoon perceived that we were entirely diſpoſed to ſympathize in their feſtivity, and alſo that part of the company were Engliſhwomen: while the gentlemen from our windows repeatedly called out in as loud voices as they could, "Vive la nation!" the people anſwered by crying, "Vivent les Anglaiſes!"

I have juſt heard an intereſting circumſtance relating to a ſoldier of Chateau-Vieux, who is now come to Paris, in order to meet his old comrades. This young man was of the number of thoſe whom the council of war at Nancy had condemned to die. He had gained the affections of a girl who was an inhabitant of Nancy. With that anguiſh of heart which thoſe who have loved can perhaps conceive, and which to

thoſe

ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux, defended theſe citizens; both parties were in the moſt fatal error; a profuſion of blood was ſhed; and Bouillé on this occaſion acted a fit prelude to that deſign of betraying his country which he had formed at the very moment when he accepted the command of a conſiderable force, and had ſworn fidelity to the new government. Compared to the baſeneſs of ſuch conduct, the bold open defiance of the party at Coblentz has ſomething in it manly and honourable.

The day after the action at Nancy, when the ſtreets were ſtrewed with dead bodies, among which were two hundred ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux, Bouillé aſſembled a council of war, which condemned twenty-two ſoldiers of this regiment to be hanged, and one to be broke upon the wheel. The laſt words of this victim were, * "Bientôt Bouillé ſera reconnu pour un traitre—Vive la nation!"—and his eyes cloſed themſelves in death.

A few of the unfortunate ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux ſtill ſurvived, and forty-two of them were condemned to the galleys, two of whom died on the ſeats to which they were chained. Forty ſtill ſurvived, and the National Aſſembly paſſed a decree for their deliverance. This decree remained long unſanctioned; but, in the mean time, the ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux received from the patriots of Breſt, all the ſupport and conſolation which their ſituation admitted. The ladies of Breſt viſited the galley where they were

* Bouillé will ſoon be found to be a traitor—Long live the nation!

chained,

chained, and ſhed tears upon their fetters, while the patriots of Paris wearied the miniſters with applications in their behalf, and the decree at length received the royal aſſent. The ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux left Breſt and came to Paris, in order to offer the tribute of their gratitude at the bar of the National Aſſembly, and to declare that the only uſe they deſired to make of the liberty to which they were reſtored, was that of ſhedding the laſt drop of their blood for the French nation.

On their way from Breſt to Paris, they were received in every town through which they paſſed with the moſt cordial welcome. They were conſidered as the victims of the common cauſe; fêtes were prepared for their reception; and bleſſings were poured forth upon the National Aſſembly for having reſtored them to liberty.

The people of Paris feeling the ſame impreſſions, determined alſo to prepare a fête for their reception. The citizens made a voluntary contribution for this purpoſe, and the plan of a very magnificent proceſſion was formed. But here the tale of diſcord begins. The enemies of the public peace ſaw in this projected fête an opportunity of fomenting diſorder and troubles, too favourable to be loſt. Reports were rapidly circulated through Paris, that this triumphal entry of the ſoldiers of Chateau-Vieux was intended as an inſult to the national guard, who had fought againſt them. Placards on this ſubject were paſted up in every ſtreet, hand-bills were diſtributed, incendiary pamphlets were publiſhed, the minds of the people became inflamed: it was aſſerted that the fête would end in a maſſacre—

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thoſe who have not it were vain to deſcribe, this unhappy girl ſaw her lover led to execution. The gloomy proceſſion paſſed by the houſe in which ſhe lived; and in the confuſion, the tumult, and diſorder occaſioned by the number of ſoldiers who were led together to execution, and by the rage, the deſpair, the violent emotions which agitated the ſpectators, this girl contrived to ſnatch her lover from the fate that threatened him, and concealed him in a garret of the houſe ſhe inhabited. How ſhe effected this, it is difficult to imagine: but you are not ignorant that love is fertile in expedients; and however it happened, the fact is certain. In this garret the young man lived concealed from every eye but that of his miſtreſs, and ſuſtained by the food which ſhe purchaſed with the labour of her hands, and which ſhe brought to him in ſecret. You will imagine the pleaſure with which ſhe toiled to ſupply the wants of her lover, and the tears of tenderneſs and gratitude with which he bathed the hand that miniſtered to his neceſſities. At the end of two months his father, a rich farmer in one of the Swiſs cantons, uncertain of the fate of his only child, and unable to endure any longer the agonies of ſuſpenſe, arrived at Nancy in ſearch of his ſon. In vain he ſought him, in vain he queſtioned every perſon he met concerning him; no tidings, no traces of him were to be found. The wretched parent wandered up and down the ſtreets of Nancy in deſpair. At length he was told that there was a young perſon in the town to whom his ſon had been much attached; and he was directed to the houſe where the young man lay concealed. The girl, when queſtioned

queſtioned about her lover, at firſt ſuſpected ſome treachery, and denied having any knowledge of what had befallen him. But ſhe ſoon perceived in the tears which ſtreamed plentifully down the old man's cheeks, in the agony which ſeemed to be bending his grey hairs to the grave, the genuine feelings of nature. She wept with him, and at length told him, that if he would call the following day, ſhe would perhaps have it in her power to give him ſome tidings of his ſon. The old man departed: the girl flew to her lover, to whom ſhe deſcribed his figure, and the young man recognized the image of his father. The next day when the old man returned, the girl led him in ſilence to the chamber where his ſon was concealed. You will imagine better than I can paint the ſcene that followed—The young ſoldier, after weeping a long while on his father's neck, told him, in a voice interrupted by ſobs, what he owed to the generous attachment of his miſtreſs; and the father, with a thouſand bleſſings, and the aſſurance of an ample proviſion, joined their hands together.

LETTER

LETTER XLVI.

THE ariſtocrates talk much of the inconſtancy and volatile diſpoſition of their countrymen, and endeavour to perſuade you that the French have taken up the cauſe of freedom with the ſame ſort of fondneſs with which they have taken up many other faſhions which are now caſt off, and inſinuate, that liberty and equality will not long remain * à l'ordre du jour.

I believe the perſons who think in this manner will find themſelves deceived. What the orator terms, in his beautiful language, "the Corinthian capital of poliſhed ſociety," is fallen for ever in this country, and the period is arrived which Shakeſpeare wiſhed for when he exclaims—

"Let none preſume
"To wear an undeſerved dignity.
"Oh, that eſtates, degrees, and offices,
"Were not deriv'd corruptly; that clear honour
"Were purchas'd by the merit of the wearer!"

You have heard, no doubt, of the appointment which has lately been made of patriotic miniſters, all of whom belong to that ſociety againſt which the houſe of Auſtria is going to open a campaign. It is to be hoped that, under the auſpices of this Jacobin miniſtry, the affairs

* The order of the day.

of

of the ſtate will be conducted with more energy, unanimity, and order, than they have hitherto been. For though the French have not yet engaged in foreign war, hoſtilities have long ago commenced between the executive and legiſlative powers, and a warm fire has been kept up on both ſides. The union which theſe two powers formed together when the king ſigned the conſtitution, has gone on as many modern marriages do, in quarrels and contention, and might perhaps have ended in a divorce, but for the ſalutary intervention of this new miniſtry, which poſſeſſes the confidence of the people.

The courtiers, however, look with no favourable eye upon the new miniſters. A gentleman of my acquaintance went to the Tuilleries yeſterday morning, when an attendant called him aſide, and told him that one of the miniſters had that moment left the king; "and I have ſuch a circumſtance to relate," added he, ſhrugging up his ſhoulders, "as will no doubt aſtoniſh you." This gentleman, who is an enthuſiaſtic patriot, immediately took alarm. He concluded that ſome freſh calamity had taken place; that ſome new combination of foreign powers was formed againſt the liberty of France; and enquired with the utmoſt earneſtneſs what had happened. * "Imaginez-vous," reſumed the attendant, "que le miniſtre n'avoit pas même de boucles!"

All, however, that can be expected from miniſters without buckles, I have no doubt the pre-

* Would you believe that the miniſter was even without buckles!

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ſent miniſtry will perform. One very important taſk which it has to execute is that of finding a remedy for the internal troubles excited by ſuch of the prieſts as have refuſed to take the oath of fidelity to the new government. There is, indeed, little religion in France; but there is ſtill a ſufficient degree of ſuperſtition and ignorance in ſome of the provinces, to give the prieſts a very dangerous influence.

A gentleman who travelled laſt autumn as far as the foot of the Pyrennees, aſked a peaſant of that country, whom he met in his walk, how he liked the revolution? * "Je ne l'aime pas, monſieur," ſaid the peaſant; "je ſuis ariſtocrate, moi. On a détruit la religion, et le pouvoir de notre ſaint père le pape." The gentleman, after reaſoning with him a little, ended by ſaying, † "Vous n'aimez pas la révolution, mon ami, et cependant elle a été faite pour vous autres: vous venez de faire la moiſſon ſans payer la dixme à vos prêtres." "Ah, monſieur," anſwered the peaſant with quickneſs, "nous aimons la révolution pour ça."

"There is one thing," ſaid a ſhopkeeper's wife to me lately, "which hinders me from being a good patriot. I know you are free in England, but then you are heretics; and I am afraid the very ſame thing will happen in France: ‡ "moi je raiſonne."

* I do not love it, ſir; I am an ariſtocrate. They have deſtroyed our religion, and the power of our holy father the pope.

† You do not love the revolution, my friend, and yet it has been made for you. You have juſt gathered in your harveſt without paying the tithe to your prieſts.—Ah, ſir, we like the revolution for that.

‡ I reaſon.

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The majority of the French nation, however, reaſon too, and with ſuch ſucceſs, that I believe ſuperſtition will ſoon be baniſhed from this country. Knowledge is diffuſing itſelf over the land with an irreſiſtible progreſs; the liberal opinions of philoſophy, liberty, and truth, are every where burſting forth like the freſh leaves of ſpring; and the period is haſtening near when, like the flowers of ſummer, theſe opinions will be full-blown.

LETTER XLVII.

A Friend of mine, who is lately gone to Toulouſe, has ſent me from thence an account of ſome circumſtances which happened not long ago in that part of France, and which ſhe ſays are ſtill much the ſubject of converſation. I ſhall tranſcribe this narrative, which I believe will intereſt you. Perhaps a novel-writer, by the aid of a little additional miſery, and by giving the circumſtances which actually happened a heightened colour—by taking his pallet, and daſhing with the full glow of red what nature had only tinged with pale violet, might almoſt ſpin a volume from theſe materials. Yet, after all, nothing is ſo affecting as ſimplicity, and nothing ſo forcible as truth. I ſhall therefore ſend you the ſtory exactly as I received it; and

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in ſuch parts of it as want intereſt, I beg you will recollect that you are not reading a tale of fiction; and that in real life incidents are not always placed as they are in novels, ſo as to produce ſtage effect. In ſome parts of the narrative you will meet with a little romance; but perhaps you will wonder that you meet with no more; ſince the ſcene is not in the cold philoſophic climate of England, but in the warm regions of the ſouth of France, where the imagination is elevated, where the paſſions acquire extraordinary energy, and where the fire of poetry flaſhed from the harps of the Troubadours amidſt the ſullen gloom of the Gothic ages.

A young Frenchman, whoſe uſual reſidence was at Paris, having travelled as far as Toulouſe the year before the revolution, was invited by a party of his friends to accompany them to Bareges, where ſome of them were going in purſuit of amuſement, and others in ſearch of health from the medicinal ſprings which riſe ſo plentifully, both in hot and cold ſtreams, among the Pyrenean mountains.

This young Pariſian, who had ſome taſte for the ſublime ſcenery of nature, felt that it would be luxury to leave a little longer the regular walks which art has planted in the Thuilleries, and the trim gardens and jets-d'eaux ſhe has formed at Verſailles; to wander amongſt thoſe piles of mountains which overhang each other, and liſten to the torrents which fall down them with loud and irreſiſtible impetuoſity.

" Rich in her weeping country's ſpoils, Verſailles
" May boaſt a thouſand fountains, that can caſt
" The tortur'd waters to the diſtant heav'ns:
" Yet let me chooſe ſome pine-topp'd precipice
" Abrupt and ſhaggy, whence a foamy ſtream,
" Like Anio, tumbling roars."———

What powerful ſenſations does the firſt view of ſuch a ſcene produce!—We ſeem to begin a new exiſtence—every former impreſſion is for a while eraſed from the memory, and the mind feels enwrapped and loſt in the ſtrong emotions of awe, aſtoniſhment, and admiration.

Bareges was crowded, as it uſually is in the ſeaſon, not only with French company, but alſo with ſtrangers, who travel from other countries, in order to uſe its celebrated baths. The company amuſed themſelves, as they generally do at water-drinking places, by ſauntering, lounging, cards, lotteries, jeux-d'éſprit, and ſcandal.

Bareges is a very expenſive place. Even moderate accommodations muſt be purchaſed at a high rate; and proviſions, as well as lodgings, are ſometimes obtained with difficulty. Bareges is therefore ſeldom reſorted to by any but people of conſiderable fortune, who can afford to level the obſtacles which mountains interpoſe to their conveniences and comforts, by the all-ſubduing force of gold.

Among a number of perſons of rank and fortune, there was however one family at Bareges in a different ſituation. This family conſiſted of an elderly infirm French officer, who had long been afflicted with the palſy, and his daughter, a young woman about nineteen years of age.

Their appearance and mode of living ſeemed to indicate, that, though in ſearch of relief this old officer had journeyed to Bareges, he had in ſo doing far exceeded the bounds of economy which his circumſtances preſcribed, and was forced to deny himſelf every acccommodation his infirmities could ſpare. He lived in the moſt retired manner, in the worſt lodging at Bareges; and, while the other ladies were dreſſed in a ſtyle of expenſive variety and profuſion, his daughter wore only a plain linen gown, which, though always perfectly clean, was coarſe; and her dark hair was left unpowdered and without any ornament whatever. Fortunately for Madelaine however (for that was her name), her perſon was calculated to make her coarſe gown appear to the beſt advantage; and though ſhe was not very beautiful, her countenance had an expreſſion of ſweetneſs which anſwered the end of beauty by exciting love and admiration.

The company at Bareges ſoon became acquainted with each other, and the ladies always took notice of Madelaine when they met her in their walks, which however did not happen very often, for her father was frequently unable to go out. When he did, he was ſupported on one ſide by Madelaine, and on the other by his ſervant. It was impoſſible to ſee with inſenſibility the attention which this intereſting young woman paid her father, whom ſhe never quitted one moment. It was remarked with what careful tenderneſs ſhe uſed to lead him along the ſtreet of Bareges, walking the ſloweſt pace ſhe could, and watching his ſteps as he moved feebly on. And when he was not able to venture out, ſhe

was ſeen at the window of their little parlour reading in order to entertain him. Her looks and manner announced that her diſpoſition was naturally ſprightly, and that ſhe would have been gay, if her father had not been ſick. But all the cheerfulneſs ſhe could aſſume while he ſuffered, was exerted to amuſe him, and ſhorten the tedious hours of langour and debility.

Though Madelaine was handſome, the obſcurity and ſecluſion in which ſhe lived preſerved her from the envy of the women. They knew well enough that the gentlemen at Bareges were for the moſt part men of the world, who, though they may admire beauty, and approve of virtue, are never ſo far the dupes of any tender or moral ſentiment as to let it interfere either with their vanity, their ambition, or their intereſt. Although the French revolution had not yet happened, theſe ladies were aware that, with reſpect to marriage, the age of *calculators* was already come, and therefore no rival was to be feared in Madelaine. The ladies joined with the men in admiring the graces of her perſon, and the amiable qualities which her conduct diſplayed. Madelaine in ſhort became the object of genéral eſteem.

Auguſte, for ſo I ſhall call our young Pariſian, who has loſt his title ſince the laws of equality have been eſtabliſhed in his country—Auguſte ſpoke leſs of Madelaine than the other gentlemen at Bareges; but it was perhaps becauſe he thought of her more. Sometimes in his ſolitary morning rambles he uſed to make compariſons between her and the Pariſian ladies among

whom he had paſſed the winter, and the compariſon generally ended with a deep ſigh. The ſcene of theſe meditations was certainly much in Madelaine's favour. Perhaps at Paris or Verſailles, Auguſte might have been dazzled by the poliſhed graces of a fine lady rouged, powdered, perfumed, and equipped for conqueſt. Theſe artificial attractions might perhaps have accorded well enough with clipped trees and angular walks. But Madelaine's ſimple manners, Madelaine's natural ſmiles and unſtudied bluſhes were far more in uniſon with the Pyrenean mountains.

One evening, when Auguſte was walking in the town of Bareges with ſome ladies, he ſaw Madelaine at a little diſtance aſſiſting with great difficulty to ſupport her father, who appeared to be ſeized with a fit. Auguſte darted like an arrow towards the ſpot, and held up the officer till he found himſelf ſomewhat recovered; and then Auguſte, with a ſort of gentle violence, obliged Madelaine, who was pale and trembling, to let go her father's arm, and ſuffer him to aſſiſt the ſervant in leading him home, which was but a few ſteps farther. Auguſte entered the houſe, where he remained till the old officer was a little revived; and, after prevailing upon Madelaine to take a few hartſhorn drops, he retired.

The next morning he felt that common civility required he ſhould pay the old officer a viſit, and learn how he had paſſed the night. It happened that Madelaine had the very ſame idea. "Surely," thought ſhe, "it will be very ſtrange if this young man, who was ſo kind, ſo careful of my father, and who made me take ſome hartſhorn drops, ſhould neglect to call and enquire

after us." This idea had come acroſs her mind ſeveral times; and ſhe was meditating upon it at her father's bedſide, when Auguſte was announced.

The old officer, who had all the finiſhed politeneſs of his country and his profeſſion, received him in the moſt courteous manner; and, though he ſpoke with ſome difficulty, yet he was profuſe in acknowledgments for the ſervice Auguſte had rendered him. Madelaine's thanks were few and ſimply expreſſed; but the tone in which they were uttered was ſuch that Auguſte felt he could have ſacrificed his life to have deſerved them.

The old officer ſtill continued ſick, and therefore Auguſte ſtill conſidered it as an indiſpenſable mark of attention to go every day, and learn the ſtate of his health. He alſo began to feel that theſe viſits became every day more neceſſary to his own happineſs. That happineſs was indeed embittered by many painful reflections. He well knew that to obtain his father the Count de ——'s conſent to marry Madelaine, was as impoſſible as it was for himſelf to conquer the paſſion ſhe had inſpired. He knew exactly the order in which his father's enquiries would run on this ſubject. He was aware that there were two interrogatories to be anſwered. The firſt was—"How many thouſand livres has ſhe a year?" And the ſecond—"Is ſhe noble?" And nothing could be more embarraſſing than that the enquiry concerning fortune would, he was ſure, come firſt; ſince that was the only article which could not be anſwered in a ſatisfactory manner; for to Madelaine's family no objection

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tion could have been made. By the way, though the former nobility of France would not abſolutely contaminate the pure ſtreams of noble blood by an union with the daughter of a *roturier*, they had always ſufficient generoſity to abate ſome generations of nobility in favour of a proper equivalent in wealth.

Auguſte, while he was convinced of the impoſſibility of obtaining his father's conſent to his marriage, did not pay Madelaine one viſit the leſs from that conſideration; and when the uſual hour of his viſit arrived, he often ſuddenly broke a chain of admirable reaſoning on the imprudence of his attachment, in order to haſten to the dwelling of her he loved. In a ſhort time he ceaſed all kind of reaſoning on the ſubject, and abandoned his heart without reſerve to the moſt violent and unconquerable paſſion.

Auguſte made a declaration to the old officer of the ſentiments which his daughter had inſpired. The old gentleman mentioned it to Madelaine, and ſhe only anſwered by tears of which he perfectly underſtood the meaning. When Auguſte explained his ſituation with reſpect to his father, the officer deſired him to think of his daughter no more. Auguſte felt that he might as well have deſired him to ceaſe to breathe. He continued his viſits, and the officer was ſoon reduced to that ſtate of languor and debility which left him neither the power nor the wiſh to forbid them. His complaints increaſed every day, and were attended with many alarming ſymptoms. The ſeaſon for the waters of Bareges was now paſt, and all the company

left the place, except the old officer, who was too weak to be removed, and Auguſte, who, while Madelaine remained, had no power to tear himſelf from the ſpot. In a few weeks the old officer felt that his dying hour was near. Auguſte knelt with Madelaine at his bedſide—her voice was ſuffocated by tears; and Auguſte had ſcarcely power to articulate in broken accents that he would devote his life to the happineſs of Madelaine. The old officer fixed his eyes with a look of tender anxiety upon his daughter, and ſoon after expired. Madelaine mourned for her father with uncontrouled affliction, nor could the attentions of her lover diſpel that anguiſh with which her affectionate heart lamented the loſs of her parent.

The winter being far advanced, ſhe propoſed to defer her journey to the diſtant province where ſhe and her father had lived, until ſpring, and to place herſelf in the mean time in a convent not far from Bareges. Auguſte exerted all the eloquence of love to induce her to conſent immediately to a private marriage. She heſitated at this propoſal; and while they were converſing together on the ſubject, the door of the room in which they were ſitting was ſuddenly thrown open, and Auguſte ſaw his father the Count de ——— enter. He had heard of the attachment which detained his ſon at Bareges, and had haſtened to tear him from the ſpot before it was too late. He upbraided his ſon with great bitterneſs, and began alſo to upbraid Madelaine: but there was ſomething in her looks, her ſilence, and her tears, which ſtifled the terms of haughty reproach in which he was prepared to addreſs her;

her; and ordering his ſon to leave the room, he deſired to ſpeak to her alone. After explaining to her the abſolute impoſſibility of her being ever united to his ſon, and his determination to diſinherit him, and leave his whole fortune to his ſecond ſon, if Auguſte ſhould perſiſt in his attachment to her—after endeavouring to awaken her pride and her generoſity, he deſired to know where ſhe propoſed going. She told him her intention of placing herſelf immediately in the convent of ——. He approved of this deſign, and left her to go to his ſon. No ſooner was the door of the room ſhut, than Madelaine gave way to thoſe tears which ſhe had ſcarcely been able to reſtrain while the Count was ſpeaking. She had never felt ſo ſenſibly her orphan condition as at this moment; and the dear remembrance of her fond father was mingled with the agony of diſappointed love.

Meantime the Count de ——— declared to his ſon, that his only chance of ever obtaining his miſtreſs depended on his abſolute unconditional ſubmiſſion to his commands, and that he muſt inſtantly attend him to Paris. Auguſte eagerly enquired what was to become of Madelaine; and his father told him that ſhe had determined to take refuge in the convent of ——. Auguſte abſolutely refuſed to depart till he was allowed an interview with Madelaine. The Count was obliged to conſent; but before he ſuffered them to meet, he obtained a promiſe from Madelaine not to mention to her lover any particulars of the converſation which had paſſed between her and the Count.

Auguſte,

Auguſte, in this laſt interview with Madelaine, atoned for the cruel diſdain of his father, by the moſt ſolemn and paſſionate aſſurances of fidelity, not to be ſhaken by time or circumſtance; and then, after attempting to leave the room ſeveral times, and returning as often, he at length tore himſelf away. Madelaine, when ſhe ſaw him depart, felt that every earthly hope had vaniſhed with him.

She ſet out early the next morning for the convent of ——; but not till after ſhe had ſat for ſome time weeping in the chair which Auguſte uſed to occupy.

Madelaine paſſed the remaining part of the winter in the convent of ——, during which period ſhe received frequent letters from Auguſte; and when ſpring arrived he conjured her, inſtead of removing to her own province, to remain a little longer in her preſent ſituation; and flattered her with hopes of being able ere long to fulfil thoſe engagements upon which all his happineſs depended.

In the ſummer of this year an event took place which will render that ſummer for ever memorable. The French nation, too enlightened to bear any longer thoſe monſtrous oppreſſions which ignorance of its juſt rights alone had tolerated, ſhook off its fetters, and the revolution was accompliſhed.

Madelaine was a firm friend to the revolution, which ſhe was told had made every Frenchman free. "And if every Frenchman is free," thought Madelaine, "ſurely every Frenchman may marry the woman he loves." It appeared to Madelaine, that, putting all political conſiderations,

rations, points upon which ſhe had not much meditated, out of the queſtion, obtaining liberty of choice in marriage was alone well worth the trouble of a revolution; and ſhe was as warm a patriot from this ſingle idea, as if ſhe had ſtudied the declaration of rights made by the Conſtituent Aſſembly, in all its extent and conſequences.

The Count de ———, who was informed of the correſpondence between the two lovers, and who ſaw little hopes of his ſon's ſubduing a paſſion which this intercourſe of letters ſerved to cheriſh, contrived means to have Auguſte's letters intercepted at the convent. In vain Madelaine enquired with all the anxiety of tenderneſs for letters. In vain ſhe counted the hours till the return of the poſt-days. Poſt after poſt arrived, and brought no tidings of Auguſte. Three months paſſed in the cruel torments of anxiety and ſuſpenſe, and were at length ſucceeded by deſpair. Madelaine believed ſhe was forgotten —forgotten by Auguſte!—She conſulted her own heart, and it ſeemed to her impoſſible; yet, after a ſilence of three months, ſhe could doubt no longer.

Poor Madelaine now recollected with anguiſh, inſtead of pleaſure, that all Frenchmen were free. She would have found ſome ſad conſolation in believing that all Frenchmen were ſlaves. It would have been ſome alleviation of her ſorrows if Auguſte had been forced to abandon her; and ſhe fancied ſhe could have borne to loſe him, if ſhe had been ſure that he ſtill loved her —it was loſing him by his own fault that filled her heart with pangs almoſt inſupportable.

The little pittance which Madelaine, after paying her father's debts, had left for her own ſupport, was inſufficient to defray her expences as a penſioner in the convent. She had already, by her ſweetneſs and gentleneſs, gained the affections of ſome of the nuns, to whom ſhe was alſo attached, and who inceſſantly conjured her to take the veil. "And why," ſhe ſometimes exclaimed, "why ſhould I heſitate any longer in ſo doing? Since Auguſte is loſt, what have I to regret in renouncing the world? What ſacrifice do I make? what happineſs do I reſign?"

Madelaine had no ties to the world, of which ſhe knew but little: but to ſeparate herſelf irrecoverably, and for ever, from him to whom her ſoul was devoted—to ſee him, to hear his voice no more—to take vows which would make it even a crime to think of him—to baniſh him even from her thoughts—alas! Madelaine felt like Eloiſa——

"All is not Heav'n's while Abelard has part,
"Still rebel nature holds out half my heart!"

Sometimes too the idea occurred that Auguſte might love her ſtill—"And am I then," thought Madelaine, "going to reduce myſelf to a ſtate in which I ſhall be forced to wiſh he were unfaithful, in order to ſave me from the agonies of remorſe!"—She put off all thoughts of entering on her novitiate for ſome weeks longer—no letters arrived, and again her reſolution to take the veil returned. "Why," cried ſhe, "why ſhould I ſtill continue to lament that inconſtant

conſtant lover who thinks of me no more? Alas, alas, did he not ſee the anguiſh of my ſoul at parting with him?—Does he not know the deſerted ſituation in which I am left?—Oh, yes! he knows I have no other refuge, no other reſource than taking the veil—no doubt he wiſhes to hear I have done ſo—he will find in my renunciation of the world ſome excuſe for his infidelity—Oh, heavens! will Auguſte hear then that I am ſeparated from him for ever without one ſigh?—Ah, why need I deliberate any longer?—My trials will ſoon be paſt—I feel that my heart will break—yes, death will come to my relief—and in heaven I ſhall find my father!"

Madelaine at length determined to join the holy ſiſterhood of the convent. The white veil for her novitiate was prepared. The day was fixed, when, proſtrate with her face towards the earth, and with flowers ſcattered over her, and a part of her long treſſes cut off, ſhe was to enter upon that ſolemn trial preparatory to her eternal renunciation of the world—of Auguſte.

A few days before that which was appointed for the ceremony, Madelaine was called to the parlour, where ſhe found her lover, with ſome of the municipal officers of the town, wearing their national ſcarfs.

Madelaine, at the ſight of Auguſte, with difficulty reached a chair, in which ſhe fell back ſenſeleſs; while Auguſte could not forbear uttering ſome imprecations againſt the iron grate by which they were ſeparated, and which prevented him from flying to her aſſiſtance. He, however, procured help, and Madelaine recovered.

One

One of the municipal officers then informed her, that they had received the day before a decree of the National Aſſembly, forbidding any nuns to be profeſſed. He added, that the municipality had already given information of this new law to the abbeſs, who had conſented to allow Madelaine to leave the convent immediately. As he pronounced theſe laſt words, Madelaine looked at her lover. Auguſte haſtened to explain to her that his uncle, who loved him and pitied his ſufferings, had at length made a will, leaving him his fortune upon condition that his father conſented to his marriage with Madelaine.

When her lover and the municipal officers departed, Madelaine retired to her apartment, to give way to thoſe delicious tears which were poured from a heart overflowing with wonder, thankfulneſs, and joy. When her firſt emotions had ſubſided, ſhe began to pack up her little wardrobe in preparation for leaving the convent on the following day. "I always loved the revolution," thought Madelaine, as ſhe laid aſide the white gown in which ſhe was to be married the next morning; "and this laſt decree is ſurely of all others the beſt and wiſeſt—but if it had come too late!"—At this idea Madelaine took up the veil for her novitiate, which lay upon her table, and bathed it with a flood of tears.

The next morning Auguſte and Madelaine were married in the pariſh-church of ———, and immediately after the ceremony ſet out for Paris, where they now live, and are, I am told, two of the happieſt people and the beſt patriots in France.

LETTER

LETTER XLVIII.

A Curé of my acquaintance is juſt going to be married. He has had a literary diſpute with the biſhop of his dioceſe, on the right of the clergy to marry. The curé inſiſts that it is the natural right of every man to take unto himſelf a wife, if he thinks proper to run that riſk; and he confeſſed to me yeſterday, that, though he felt not the ſmalleſt inclination to enter into the marriage ſtate, but on the contrary preferred a ſingle life, he had reſolved upon matrimony merely to ſhew Monſ. l'Evêque, that a prieſt might take that meaſure if he pleaſed. I know ſome married people both in France and England, who would perhaps think this is carrying the deſire of triumph in argument rather too great a length; and who would, I believe, counſel the curé to yield this polemic victory, ſooner than purchaſe it with a wife into the bargain. But my friend the curé is ſo amiable, that I am perſuaded he will make an excellent huſband, and will be happy in ſpite of the biſhop.

I go frequently to a ſpacious church which the French proteſtants have lately purchaſed, called St. Thomas de Louvre, where divine worſhip is performed every Sunday, and where the ſacrament was laſt week adminiſtered. The idea that in the boſom of that city, even on the very ſpot which a few ages paſt was ſtained by the moſt cruel perſecution of the proteſtants, we were

were now publicly exerciſing the moſt ſolemn rite of our religion, in the preſence of a conſiderable number of Roman Catholics, who witneſſed that ſacred ceremony with the moſt reſpectful ſilence and attention—this reflection joined to the tender recollection of my own country, to which I was led by hearing the ſervice performed for the firſt time in a foreign country, and in a foreign language; and to that retroſpect of paſt life which naturally ariſes in a mind of any ſenſibility, when it renews this ſacred engagement with the great Author of its exiſtence—all theſe different impreſſions crowded upon my heart, my eyes were filled with tears, and I never felt my mind more touched and elevated by devotion. Monſieur Maron, the French proteſtant miniſter, preaches with the moſt perſuaſive eloquence. I wiſh our Engliſh clergy would ſometimes addreſs their diſcourſes to the feelings, as well as to the underſtanding. It is not the reaſoning but the ſentimental part of religion that ſoftens every evil to which humanity is ſubject, that ſooths the troubled ſpirit, that heals the broken heart.

LETTER XLIX.

I WRITE to you from Montreüil ſur Mer, where I ſhall paſs two or three weeks in my way to England. We left Paris the latter end of April,

April, and found the country covered with that firſt freſh tint of ſpring which is ſo lovely, but ſo tranſient. The trees were white with bloſſoms; and nature, full of youth, hope, and joy, wore the aſpect of all others the moſt enchanting to the eye, and the moſt ſoothing to the imagination. Yet the contemplation of returning ſpring naturally leads the mind to recal the ſprings that are paſt, and to take a retroſpect of life: and thoſe in whom ſuch a retroſpect excites no melancholy reflections muſt ſurely be either peculiarly fortunate, or peculiarly inſenſible.

But, at the ſame time, we find in the lovely images which ſpring preſents, a cure for thoſe gloomy reflections which the return of that ſeaſon has perhaps awakened. For while we ſee nothing around us but images of beauty and delight, "while nothing ſtrikes the eye but ſights of bliſs," the darker ſhades of care and ſorrow vaniſh, and leave only that gentle and tender melancholy which it is luxury to indulge—"that ſadneſs of the countenance by which the heart is made better."

My mother found herſelf, one evening during our journey, ſo much fatigued, that, inſtead of being able to reach Amiens, where we intended to ſleep that night, we were obliged to ſtop at a very ſmall village ſome leagues diſtant. The landlord of the little inn where we alighted, received us with an air of conſcious dignity and ſelf importance which but ill accorded with the appearance of his dwelling. We enquired if he could furniſh us with beds: he ſeemed offended at the queſtion, as implying in it ſome doubt,

and

and anſwered with impatience, * " Mais, madame, comme à la ville."—We found, however, that the walls of the rooms where people were lodged " comme à la ville," were of bare brick. " What is the name of this place?" ſaid I to a ruddy-cheeked ſervant-girl who waited upon us. † " Madame," ſaid ſhe, " c'eſt Serteaux, pour vous obéir."

The maſter of the inn having got the better of the ill humour our firſt enquiries had occaſioned, aſſured us we ſhould have an excellent ſupper, and that he underſtood the art of cookery perfectly, having aſſiſted ſome years in the kitchen of Madame la Princeſſe de Monaco. He by no means over-rated his talents; the ſupper was extremely well dreſſed. When we had ſupped, he told us that we might conſider ourſelves as in perfect ſafety under his roof: " for I, ladies," added he, in an elevated accent, " am the mayor of the village, and have two national guards every night at my door. I ſaved the chateau of a perſon who was very odious to his peaſants, from being burnt, by haranguing the people, and convincing them of the enormity of the action; and my fellow-citizens, in gratitude for my ſervices on that occaſion, unanimouſly choſe me for their mayor."

I congratulated Monſ. Le Maire on the happy effects of his eloquence, and he immediately ſtepped out of the room, and returned with a national ſcarf in his hand, and a fierce grenadier's cap, which had been preſented to him as

* To be ſure, madam, as well as in the town.
† This is Serteaux, madam, to obey you.

trophies

trophies of his patriotiſm. I enquired how many national guards there were in the village. "No leſs than eighty men," ſaid he; "and I am their colonel." The honours, dignities, and high offices, civil and military, of our landlord, now crowded ſo thick upon us, that we could ſcarcely reconcile ourſelves to the trouble we gave him of bringing little moveable frames, for matreſſes, into the room where we had ſupped, and which the chief magiſtrate arranged with admirable dexterity. Next morning we found he had thrown aſide his white jacket, and was arrayed in the national uniform. When we recollected that our veal-cutlets had been dreſſed by a colonel, and our matreſſes arranged by a mayor, we felt ourſelves ſomewhat in the ſituation of Don Quixote when queens ſaddled his horſe, and ducheſſes held his bridle. We made very low curtſies to our hoſt at parting, which he returned by clapping his hand on his military cap.—Apropos of travelling—A French gentleman of my acquaintance told me, that he was once going in his cabriolet from Paris to Calais, when he was accoſted by a man who was walking along the road, and who begged the favour of him to let him put his great coat, which he found very heavy, into the carriage. "With all my heart," ſaid the gentleman; "but if we ſhould not be travelling to the ſame place, how will you get your coat?" "Monſieur," anſwered the man with great naïveté, * "je ſerai dedans." The gentleman immediately took him into his carriage.

* I ſhall be in it.

Mon-

Montreüil is an old melancholy looking town, with no trade, and few inhabitants. Some families of the little nobleſſe who reſided in this place, have thought proper to prove their nobility by a trip to Coblentz. Their houſes are left deſerted; graſs grows in the ſtreets; and I expect to ſee the fox which Oſſian mentions, looking out of the window.

Here are a great number of very antient Gothic edifices; and one of them, near which we are lodged, affords me frequent ſubject of meditation. This is the Hotel-Dieu. In every town of France you find one of thoſe hoſpitals called Hotels-Dieu, where the ſick are attended by an order of nuns, who take vows to devote their lives to that purpoſe. The moſt perfect cleanlineſs and order reigns in theſe houſes. But how great are the ſacrifices made, from a principle of piety, by theſe nuns, many of whom are in the very bloom of youth! To devote life to the moſt diſguſting occupations—to breathe only the air of contagion—to watch in ſad ſucceſſion every ſixth or eighth night, through the long years of life, in the chambers of diſeaſe—to dreſs wounds—to perform for ſtrangers thoſe offices at which nature moſt recoils, and which we can ſcarcely fulfil without reluctance, even for thoſe to whom our ſouls are bound by the ſtrongeſt ties of duty and affection—to bear with unwearied patience the never-ceaſing groans of thoſe that ſuffer—to adminiſter, with that unfailing tenderneſs which long habit has not blunted, the remedies preſcribed—to live amongſt the dying—theſe ſurely are ſacrifices which nothing but a ſentiment of religion could inſpire—

Surely

Surely it may be ſaid of ſuch perſons, "Ye are not of this world!"

When we turn our thoughts from ſuch a ſcene as this, to that unfeeling indifference which prevails in the world—its ſelfiſh purſuit of its own intereſt—its eager ſearch of its own gratifications—its coldneſs to the pains of others—its vanities—its littleneſs—its luxuries—we find it at a diſtance ſo remote from ſuch virtue, that the nuns of the Hotels-Dieu appear like beings elevated above our pity, and only call forth admiration.

On Sunday laſt, after veſpers, the tree of liberty was planted, with great rejoicings, in the middle of the ſquare in which we live. A flag, from which ſtreamed the national colours, was faſtened to the higheſt branches, crowned with a bonnet rouge. When this cheriſhed tree was firmly rooted in the earth amidſt the acclamations of the multitude, an officer of the national guard mounted on a chair beneath the ſhade of the tree, and read a paper of inſtruction to the people, who formed a circle round him, and liſtened with the moſt reſpectful attention. After deſcanting upon the bleſſings of the conſtitution, the orator enforced the neceſſity of the moſt abſolute ſubmiſſion to the laws.—The tree of liberty, with its green branches, and waving ſtreamers; the orator placed under its ſhade; and the circle which ſurrounded him, formed altogether a moſt pictureſque groupe. There was ſomething in the ſcene which gave me an idea of the ſimplicity of ancient times. As ſoon as the harangue was ended, a gun was fired; and ça ira, the beloved ſignal of gaiety, and accompaniment of joy, was immediately played, while

the

the people danced with all their hearts and ſouls.

We have had, indeed, no leſs than two trees of liberty planted in the ſquare: for the little boys of the town anticipated the ceremony by planting a young tree, of which they got poſſeſſion the day before it took place. This young tree had alſo a bonnet rouge, made of paper, and colours compoſed of the ſame materials. It was not indeed very ſteadily ſeated in the earth, and might with propriety have been called * une liberté chancelante: but the winds did not viſit it too roughly, and it kept its ſtation. A national guard of citizens, from ſix to twelve years of age, was mounted near the tree, armed, in caſe of an attack, with wooden fuſees. As we paſſed this formidable band, the captain demanded a few ſous to buy a drum † pour la nation. We have too much friendſhip for the French nation to refuſe ſo moderate a ‡ don patriotique, and we produced ſome national coins. The little groupe, by way of thanking us, cried over and over again, to the echoes of the hills, § "Vive, vive la nation!"

The French boys, with that ſpirit of imitation which belongs to children, have no amuſements, no paſtimes, that have not a reference to liberty. They imbibe theſe national leſſons with great avidity; and I am apt to believe that, if the enemies of freedom could annihilate the preſent race of Frenchmen, the riſing generation would, ten or twenty years hence, throw aſide their wooden fuſees for more terrible weapons, and act over again, in the ſight of their oppreſſors, the martial exerciſes of their childhood.

LETTER

* A wavering liberty. † For the nation. ‡ Patriotic gift.
§ Long live the nation.

LETTER L.

I HAVE nothing to relate but what is melancholy and painful. The repulſe which the French have met with at Tournay was trifling; and were it not, a defeat is the common chance of war, and would be an evil light indeed compared to the diſgrace, the ſhocking criminality which has attended it. A few days before I left Paris, the war with Germany was declared. The French, long inſulted by the court of Vienna, rejoiced that the moment to aſſert the injured honour of a great and gallant nation was at length arrived. They ſaw before them, in long and radiant perſpective, city after city yielding to the arms of men who, renouncing all views of extending the French empire, only armed themſelves in defence of their juſt rights, and who felt that

"Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel juſt."

Forced to engage in a war againſt the tyrants of the earth, the French had declared (to tranſlate the words of Monſ. Condorcet, in his ſublime declaration made in the name of the National Aſſembly), "that the ſoldiers would conduct themſelves in a foreign territory as they would have conducted themſelves on the territory of France, had they been there forced to engage in combat; that even the accidental evils which the French troops might occaſion to the people of thoſe foreign territories, ſhould be repaired; that to repulſe violence, to reſiſt oppreſſion, to forget injuries that were paſt, to receive enemies reconciled,

ciled, or diſarmed, as brothers—ſuch were the ſentiments which the nation would find in the ſouls of Frenchmen, and ſuch was the war which they declared againſt their enemies."

Thus had the French nation prepared every generous mind to eſpouſe its cauſe. No ſooner was it made known that the armies on the frontiers ſtood in need of recruits, than the young men in every province of France enliſted themſelves with an ardour which only the ſacred ſentiment of liberty could have inſpired.

No ſooner was the war declared, than the bar of the National Aſſembly was every day crowded with citizens, who according to their ability contributed, with fond enthuſiaſm, their mite towards the ſupport of the common cauſe.

Little, indeed, did the people dream of defeat, but far leſs of diſhonour. * "On tue les hommes; c'eſt le triſte apanage du métier des rois: mais on ne tue pas l'honneur;" that victim muſt be offered by ourſelves. Let us not, however, include the whole French nation in the diſgrace of a few. The general gloom, indignation, and horror, produced by the aſſaſſinations at Liſle, prove that the French feel with the keeneſt ſenſibility the diſhonour incurred by ſuch atrocious conduct.

I am perſuaded they will wipe away, by the performance of the moſt noble and heroic actions, the ſtain which has been caſt upon the French arms. If you had an opportunity of knowing as well as I do, the generous, the ſublime ſacrifices which are made by individuals in the common

* They murder men; it is the melancholy privilege of kings; but they cannot murder honour.

mon cauſe—if you knew the energy of that public ſpirit, the force of that public virtue which the events of this great revolution are calculated not merely to diſplay, but create, and call forth —if you knew the inflexible purpoſe of the patriots of France * "de vivre libres ou mourir"—you would, I believe, be convinced, as I am, that they can never be ſubdued; and that, in defiance of the houſe of Auſtria, and all the other deſpotic houſes of Europe, "† *ça ira.*"

"Il faut," ſaid a French gentleman with whom I was talking on this ſubject, "‡ il faut quelques victoires roturieres."

Let us alſo remember that the great cauſe of liberty remains uncontaminated by the aſſaſſinations at Liſle. Though fanatical bigots, in the rage of ſuperſtitious cruelty, have dragged their victims to the ſtake, would it be rational to extend our abhorrence of ſuch actions to Chriſtianity itſelf?—to that benevolent religion which inculcates univerſal charity, love, and good will towards men, and chooſe the comfortleſs, the ſullen indifference of atheiſm?

And ſhall we, becauſe the fanatics of liberty have committed ſome deteſtable crimes, conclude that liberty is an evil, and prefer the gloomy tranquility of deſpotiſm? If the bleſſings of freedom have ſometimes been abuſed, it is becauſe they are not yet well underſtood. Thoſe occaſional evils which have happened in the infant ſtate of liberty, are but the effects of deſpotiſm. Men have been long treated with inhumanity, therefore they are ferocious. They have often

* To live free, or die. † It will proceed.
‡ We muſt have ſome plebeian victories."

been

been betrayed, therefore they are ſuſpicious. They have once been ſlaves, and therefore they are tyrants. They have been uſed to a ſtate of warfare, and are not yet accuſtomed to univerſal benevolence. They have long been ignorant, and have not yet attained ſufficient knowledge. They have been condemned to darkneſs, and their eyes are dazzled by light. The French have thrown aſide the ritual of deſpotiſm; but they have not all had time to learn the liturgy of that new conſtitution which is laid upon the altar of their country. But the genuine principles of enlightened freedom will ſoon be better comprehended, and may perhaps at no diſtant period be adopted by all the nations of Europe. Liberty may bring "her ſons from afar, and her daughters from the ends of the earth."

The oppreſſions which mankind have ſuffered in every age, and almoſt in every country, will lead them to form more perfect ſyſtems of legiſlation than if they had ſuffered leſs; and they will only have to regret that their happineſs has been purchaſed by the miſery of paſt ages.

Then will the reign of humanity, of order, and of peace begin; the gates of Janus will be for ever cloſed; Liberty will extend her benign influence over the nations, and "ye ſhall know her by her fruits."

END OF VOL. I.